



LODGE IN THE WOODS.

IN THE WOODS

AND

ON THE WATERS.



BY

JOHN A. MURDOCH,

PILOT MOUND,

MANITOBA.



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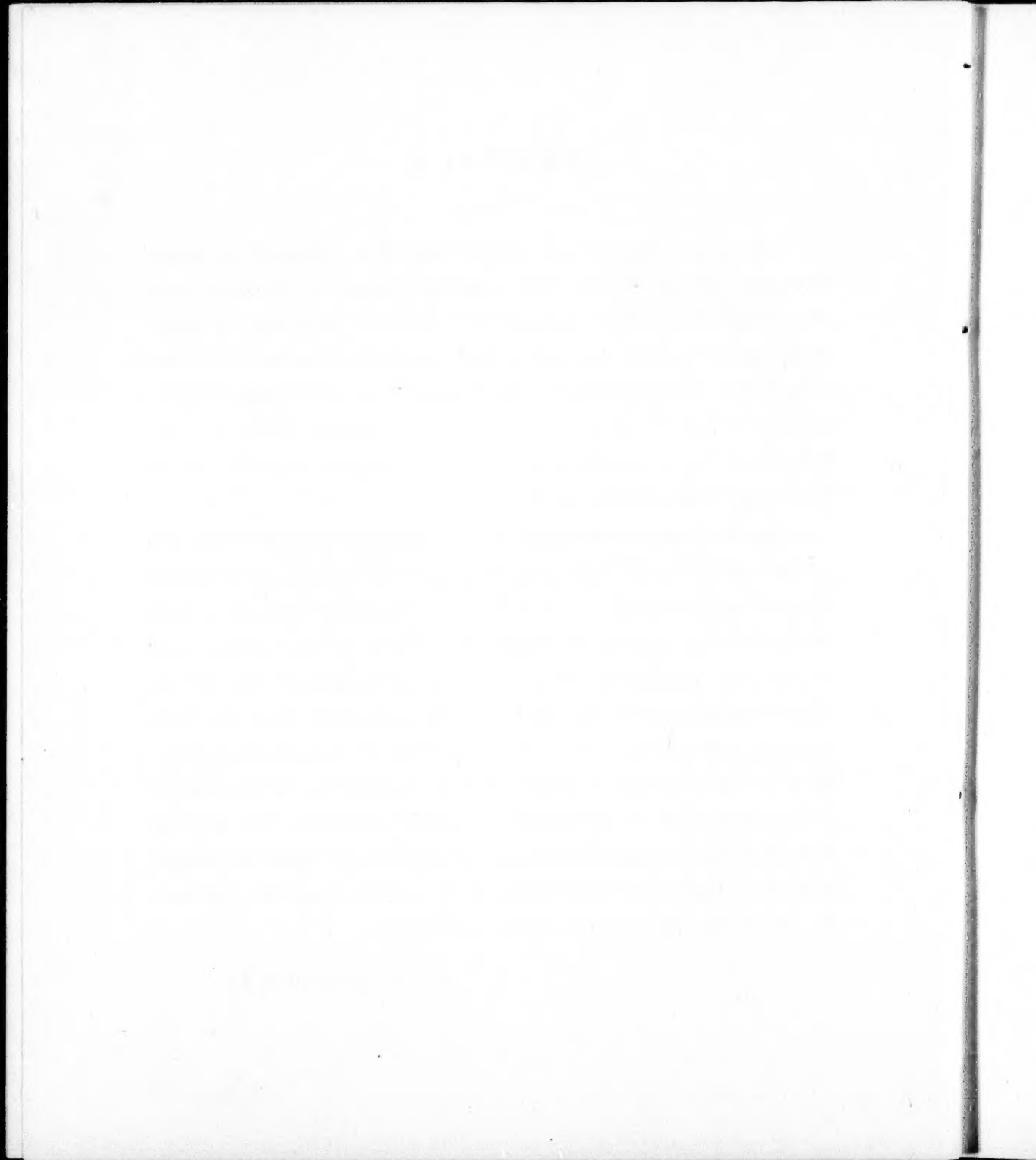
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PREFACE.

There are few persons now living who enjoyed the grandeur and beauty of the vast unsettled forest of Eastern Ontario when the woods existed in primitive wildness, seventy years ago, and of the few individuals that remain of the Old Pioneers, there are not likely to be many who will venture a description of new settlements, wild rivers, solitary lakes, or who will relate the experience of men who enjoyed the novelty of life in the bush during early days.

Partly from a reluctance to have all the romance and adventure of the past forgotten, and partly to have the pleasure of recalling, in imagination, the songs of birds that have long ceased to sing and of enjoying the verdure of the woods, long since fallen and faded, and of hearing the voices of the forest, long since hushed in the silence of the past, this story has been written, and is to some extent a history of real events and relates to the life and actions of real characters, whose words and presence it is agreeable to recall, although the persons described have long since passed away like the beautiful forests that once shaded the wild lakes and rivers or concealed the rude homes of the first settlers of the wilderness.

J. A. MURDOCH.



In the Woods and on the Waters.

Amongst the first to occupy the fine timbered lands of Eastern Ontario were the United Empire Loyalists. The men were treated in a liberal manner by the government of Canada, and had large tracts of land given them wherever they wished to select their inheritance. Unlike the other settlers, who soon commenced to scatter in the extensive and beautiful forests on the shores of rivers that flowed into the St. Lawrence, the Ottawa and the great lakes, the U. E. Loyalists were experienced in all matters relating to the settlement of a bush country. They knew the name and nature of every tree, bush, bird and beast to be met with in the forest, were quick to decide on the resources of a district and able to judge correctly of the character of the soil, rocks and timber. Many of the men made their homes near falls or rapids of the rivers and as soon as possible proceeded to erect mills, for which they had a fondness, and so became the founders of many towns and villages that gradually formed into places of importance, the mills being the commencement. The men were usually simple in their habits, correct in their understanding, observing in their na-

ture and quiet and gentle in their dispositions. They loved the woods with fervent fondness. The song of birds, the presence of the wild flowers, the waving verdure of the trees, the sound of the water falls and the hum of the bees on the forest blossoms overhead, gave them continued delight when summer glory had arrayed the blooming wilderness.

While experienced in the mysteries of woodcraft, the men possessed but little of what the world names business ability. They were honest, generous and unsuspecting, ever ready to trust to the honor and integrity of those who sought favors ; not being avaricious they were seldom rich, being liberal and kind hearted they were often imposed upon, and being ingenious and industrious they were seldom poor. The men were generally large, well made and remarkably strong. The women were usually tall and comely, often exceedingly fine looking, and possessed much individuality of character. The United Empire Loyalist made an excellent guide, a good surveyor, a persevering explorer and was at once a naturalist, a botanist, a philosopher and an engineer ; Canada owes much of its advancement to the teachings and examples of these men and the national character of Canadians is, to some extent, inherited from the loyal Americans who were amongst the first to settle in the great forests and along the wild rivers of Ontario. Col. Adams was one of these men, he was quite tall,

perfectly erect, cool, quiet and observing. Although of middle age he was so active and easy in his movements that he would have passed for a much younger man. He with some others, who were in his employment, had embarked in a large sized birch-bark canoe, which was gliding smoothly along the wild waters of a beautiful and almost unexplored river, which was walled on each side by an unbroken forest that was reflected in the clear water below.

Although late in August the woods contained many birds, which in those peaceful shades, sung all day long, a few wild flowers still lingered by the banks of the river ; here and there, in the bends of the stream, grew long, narrow beds of wild rice that in places formed a dark green fringe, along the shore. As the canoe advanced flocks of wild ducks rose clamorously, their wings, on the start, scarcely able to raise their partly and well nourished bodies from the water.

The stillness that rested on the forest seemed to have an influence on the voyageurs who sat silently, the Col. in the bow of the canoe, his chief assistant in the stern ; the third person, who was an Irishman, recently arrived from across the sea sat in the centre, but was not permitted to paddle as his unskilful efforts would have been intolerable to the others who with easy motion dipped their paddles in the water with noiseless correctness keeping perfect time.

Nor did it take much labour to move the light and graceful bark at a good speed on the unruffled stream. The Col. was enjoying the fine afternoon, surveying the woods along the shore with a scrutinizing eye, noticing the quality of the land, the formation of the rocks, where there were any, and the variety of the timber. The tracks of many deer on the soft bank showed where the animals had come down to the water to drink or to feed on the wild rice that grew along the margin of the stream. The hum of passing bees, the tap of the woodpeckers, the chatter of the squirrels on the nut bearing trees, the scream of the blue jay, and the plunge of the fish in the dark river gave an air of wildness and serenity to the situation.

The Irishman, who sat in the centre of the canoe, with an unused paddle in his hand, glanced at the heavy wall of forest shade, and at length spoke :

VJC " If you please, Col., are there any negroes, I mean Indians, in these woods ?"

For a moment the Col. seemed impatient at having his pleasing contemplations disturbed, but nevertheless answered good humoredly :

" Not many, Andy ; I see by the old camping grounds which we pass and by the ancient and overgrown pathways around the various rapids, that these beautiful groves must at

one time have been a favorite resort and a fine hunting ground for the red men, but there are very few Indians now in the immense forests that border the tributaries of the Ottawa and the St. Lawrence, and the few that exist are only occasionally seen, so scattered and diminished are the bands. The red men have also a superstition that an evil spirit haunts the shores of this river, and the large lake that we are now approaching, and this partly accounts for the absence of Indians here."

"An evil spirit," said the Irishman; "I thought from the way in which you have been looking around that you were afraid of something, but I supposed that it might be the red painted men that live in the woods. If I were a ghost I would rather live in a church-yard where I would have company than wander with bears and wolves in the bush where I think even a ghost would be lonesome."

"Jake," said the Col., addressing the steersman; "it will soon be supper time; throw out your line and see what kind of a fish you can catch."

"Sure," said Andy; "there can be no respectable fish in this wild and uncivilized stream; its a mud-turtle you'll be after catching."

"What description of a bait have you?" enquired the Col.

"Only a piece of pork," was the reply; "but that may take a pike."

"Draw up the canoe to that rock and catch a few minnows in the shallow water," said the Col.; "I hear the sound of the rapids, the water has a quicker motion and the bubbles on the surface show that we might hope for a black bass."

"Does a black bass ate bubbles?" enquired the Irishman.

"Certainly," said the Col.; "fish cannot live without air and water, and bubbles are composed of both; now you have a sufficient number of minnows, bait your hook and throw out your line. I am sure that there are fish at this spot; a large bass and a few potatoes will make a good supper for hungry men."

"Saints protect us," said Andy; "if that is to be our supper we stand every chance of going to bed hungry. The fish is in the water and the potatoes must be with him, for they are not in the boat, which, by the way, has as many ribs as a human man. Hold on! hold on!" exclaimed the now excited Irishman, as the steersman seized the tightened line with one hand and placed the paddle in the canoe with the other, while a heavy plunge some distance astern showed that a large fish had been hooked. "There you go," said the Irishman as the bass leaped high in the air; "if you cannot swim, my man, there is no use of you trying to fly. What a beauty. Get another bait; this sea is full of fish and they know no more about a hook than they do about a Jew's-harp."

"Keep quiet, Andy," said the Col.; "you disturb the stillness of the evening."

"I beg pardon of the stillness of the evening," said Andy; "but it is little noise I make compared with that cataract that is walloping down the rocks yonder."

The canoe was now brought to the shore, a short distance below the falls and unloaded, while Jake and Andy proceeded to kindle a fire and pitch the tent. The Col. took his rifle and advanced through the woods towards the head of the falls; approaching nearer the rapids he observed that the river descended about twenty or thirty feet in a distance of two or three hundred yards. About a quarter of a mile above the falls the river issued from a very large lake that contained many islands. The trees on each side of the lake and river consisted chiefly of large maple, basswood, elm, with a number of white ash, hickory and ironwood; near the water there was a fringe of evergreen trees, mostly hemlock and cedar.

"A capital place for a mill," thought the Col. as he looked at the rushing water, a most convenient place for a dam and flumes, the site is even better than I thought it was and I am glad that the property has been secured." Having moved a little distance further along the shore towards the lake he entered what seemed to be an old Indian camping ground; nearly all the large trees had been removed, probably by fire, and much

of the cleared portion was grown over with raspberry bushes, which, earlier in the season, had been covered with fruit. On a spot open to the sunshine and exposed to the breeze from the lake, a small patch of ground had been cultivated and planted with potatoes, a few radishes, some squashes and cabbages. The radishes had gone to seed, a herd of deer had discovered and devoured the cabbages, but the potatoes were uninjured, and although some weeds disfigured the ground the crop was a very good one considering the fact that the spot had not been visited by man since the seed had been planted. The Col. dug up two or three hills, placing the potatoes in the game bag which he carried, and at once returned to the camp. Andy had the utmost faith in the Col.'s resources, but to discover potatoes in a wilderness where, to the inexperienced eye, no trace of man was visible, seemed little short of a miracle.

"Saints be praised," said the Irishman ; "the evil spirit that haunts the fells must be a good gardener ; does the fruit grow wild or where did you find these potatoes ; would it be possible to discover a beefsteak in the wilderness !"

By this time the tent had been pitched, a quantity of soft, fragrant balsam branches were placed inside and blankets spread over them ; beds having been thus prepared, the three men sat down on a log near the fire to enjoy their supper, for although the evening was not cold, the fire looked cheerful and

home-like. Meally potatoes, delicious fried fish, excellent tea, with bread, butter and honey formed the repast, and as a welcome to the wild spot, which it was expected would be their home for some time to come, the Col. made a jug of punch. The Irishman succeeded in obtaining a double share, partly because the others did not apparently care for the luxury. Having lighted his pipe the Irishman sat in grave contemplation for some minutes, and at length addressed his master : "Will you please tell us, Col., if it is possible to cut down and destroy all these great trees that are standing as thickly on the ground as waves are on the sea, covering the country to the very brink of the rivers on which we have been sailing for many a day? Will these gloomy wildernesses be changed into clean, green fields with fences, houses, orchards, cattle and crops? Will there be roads, bridges, mills, with schools, churches and stores, and here and there a town or a village?"

"Yes," said the Col.; "all the changes that you have named, and the improvements which you have spoken of besides many which you have omitted, will be made in a few years." The Irishman took a somewhat incredulous look at his master and enquired if he had ever written a book.

"Why do you ask such a question?" said the Col.

"Because," replied Andy; "I thought you might be the author of the Arabian tales."

The Col. laughed and remarked that to a man who had just arrived from across the sea and was unacquainted with the method of clearing a bush country, and of turning a province, wholly covered by great forests, into productive and prosperous districts, capable of supporting a large and progressive population, the work must naturally look like an impossibility, but that in the Eastern States all this had been done in a very short period, and under greater disadvantages than had to be encountered here, for on the other side of the line the first settlers were at the commencement inexperienced, they were provided with inferior axes, besides they had often hostile Indians to contend with, while in this country the wild men are peaceable.

"If I am not too free," said the Irishman; "will you say what a little difference in the shape of an axe is likely to make in the work of clearing a whole province?"

The Col. replied "that in removing a portion of the forest success depended much on the temper, form and handle of the axe used by the woodman, who with a poor tool would be powerless in the bush."

The rising moon now appeared, brightening the tree tops and casting a radiance on the rapids of the wild river. A few heavy logs were placed on the fire to frighten any prowling animal that might otherwise intrude, and the travellers, being weary, each wrapped in his blanket and lulled by the plaintive

song of the whip-poor-will and the sound of the falling water slept in peace.

CHAPTER II.

When Andy and his companions awoke in the morning, Col. Adams had already walked forth in the woods with his rifle. On the previous evening he had noticed the tracks of deer on the soft ground of the little garden in the bush which he had visited. As there was nothing to disturb the animals he had hopes of obtaining a shot. On approaching the plain his practised eye detected a movement and soon the shadowy forms of first one deer and then another grew into shape in the gray light of the early morning. The sharp crack of the rifle caused the herd to gaze for a moment in startled astonishment and then bound with their white flags in the air. As the Col. had only noticed two deer when he fired and seeing several start off he concluded that there had not been sufficient light to enable him to take a correct aim and that he had missed, having fired at the head which was but a small mark ; however, when the smoke cleared a little from before him he found that a deer had fallen, and there was no need to look after the others which were still at no great distance, having stopped to gaze. Jake had heard the shot and guessing that there might be a

deer to carry, he soon joined his master and the venison was quickly transferred to the camp.

Andy had not been long in the country and had as yet seen nothing of a deer although he had heard that such animals inhabited the woods. When a fine haunch of venison was produced and Andy was directed to get a steak and potatoes for breakfast, the Irishman gazed steadily for some moments and then said: "Well! Well! There is no use of being astonished, but if I could do some things as well as some people the never a thing I would do at all."

When breakfast was over Andy was furnished with a spade and instructed to make an excavation in the bank, something like a small root-house, in which to place the stores, especially the bacon, butter, venison and other articles that required to be kept cool. The bags of flour meal and boxes of biscuit, were placed on pieces of wood, that they might not rest on the ground, and the large, but light, canoe was turned bottom up over the whole. Preparations were then made for cutting hay to be used when teams were brought in during the winter. A small grind-stone was set up, scythes were got ready, pitchforks were produced, and two straight, dry cedar poles were procured, the large ends were dressed down with an axe and a drawing knife; these poles were to be used in carrying the hay-ricks to the place where stacks were to be made.

Everything being now ready for hay-making, after dinner the party proceeded to the beaver meadow, which was about a mile distant.

Beaver meadows are always objects of interest to wanderers in the woods and prove an immense advantage to the pioneers of the wilderness. It is quite pleasant to step from the shade and gloom of the great forest into the clear, open space where the breeze and the sunshine are united. There is invariably a cool, clear creek passing through the meadow, the waters of which are generally highly valued by the tired and thirsty explorer. If visited in the proper season there is usually wild fruit in profusion on the bushes which border the opening in the woods. Often plums are on the trees, grapes on the vines and great numbers of large, red cranberries amongst the grass. Birds love the beaver meadow; the thickets afford shelter for old and young birds, the air in the clearing is warmer than in the shade of the great forest, and there is water and food in abundance; here a full chorus of song can be heard in the fine spring mornings, when the wild fruit trees become white with blossoms and the honey bees are busy on the fragrant bloom. The beaver meadow is a very old clearing. Some time in the dim past a colony of beavers selected the spot and commenced the construction of a dam on the creek, with all the skill of experienced engineers. At first the water was raised only a few

nches, the increase in the depth of the stream gave better facilities for floating material with which to continue the work, for timber cut by the teeth of the beaver into proper lengths is the substance mostly used. The story so often told of beavers carrying mud on their tails with which to plaster their dam is pure fiction. A steamer might as well attempt to carry freight on the screw propellor. When a beaver is swimming with a stick in its mouth the obstruction to its speed would cause the hinder parts of the beast to sink did not the broad, sinewy tail keep the animal in a proper position near the surface. There is no necessity for attempting to plaster or close openings in a dam. A dozen or more of active and industrious beavers, splashing and working in the new made pond, loosen and send down the stream sticks, leaves and grass in abundance; the loose, floating material is sucked by the water into every hole, while the pressure from above holds the substance fast in its place. As the work progresses the water rises over the wide, level valley, which the dam has been erected purposely to flood. The beavers swim freely and continually amongst the standing trees, cutting down and using such as are of a suitable size and have bark fit for food. The sole object of erecting a dam is that safe and easy access can be provided to the woods above. The standing water in time kills the larger trees that have been left uncut, but the dam may be used many years, as a little

additional rise on the works will cause the water to spread in the bush and give a new circle of green trees on which to operate. When no further supply of green timber can be procured, within a convenient distance, the beavers generally move to another place and make a new dam. The leaves that float down the stream in autumn, when the trees shed their summer verdure, the rank grass which springs up about the old dam and the roots of trees or bushes which become interlaced with the timbers, keep the structure in its place until what was at first a dam, becomes almost a solid bank, but which the creek will in time find a way through, when the water is low ; then the meadow will be dry but for weeks after the snow has melted, in the spring, the old beaver field is always a lake. The dead trees fall and decay, spring and autumn freshets bring down leaves and soil mixed with the water ; these substances settle in the still little lake that disappears with the freshet, then grass springs up, withers and decays, vegetation grows stronger each succeeding year, until such time as the beaver meadow becomes the hay field of the lumberman and the pioneer.

CHAPTER III.

The day was somewhat advanced when the party reached the breezy opening in the woods where the hay was to be cut. The creek was large, cool and clear, flowing rapidly with a pleasing sound ; the tall grass was waving in a gentle breeze and several deer, disturbed in their retirement, became suddenly interested and alarmed and proceeded to examine with curiosity and fear the mysterious creatures that had invaded their hitherto quiet retreat.

A place was soon selected and the men commenced work at once, and when each had cut a few swaths a halt was made for refreshment and work was then resumed and continued until evening, when all returned to the camp by the river ; one of the party carrying a bundle of hay with which to improve the softness of their beds.

Andy, the Irishman, had been given to poaching when in his own country, and had found it prudent to escape to Canada in consequence, and was delighted with the freedom of the forest. The deer in the beaver meadow, thrilled him with admiration and excitement ; the beautiful trout that appeared in such numbers in the stream were a special attraction. The wild plums that loaded the trees in red masses, the grapes on the

vines, that bordered the creek, but which, like the cranberries that grew everywhere in the grass, were not yet ripe, but were nevertheless a delightful possession, and so arrested his attention that he did not see how it was possible for men to work in a place that afforded so many inducements to enjoy the present hours. In a few days several stacks had been made containing as much hay as would be required for winter use, and the next work was the erection of a shanty for the accommodation of the men who were to be employed during the winter in making a clearing and in preparing timber for other buildings. As there were only three men it was necessary to select trees that were neither too large nor too heavy. It was at first purposed to build near the lake, but with the exception of narrow fringes of evergreen trees, near the water, the forest was generally of hard wood, which was, of course, heavy. It was finally decided to select a site near the falls where a grove of cedar supplied light timber, and where stone for a rude chimney could be had from the rocky formation over which the river fell. While the men were engaged in cutting logs and providing other material for the rustic lodge the Col. launched the canoe above the falls and started alone for a few days excursion on the quiet and beautiful lake which, studded with many well wooded islands and encircled by unbroken forests, was seemingly unvisited by man. On one side of the fine sheet of

water there was a considerable number of pine trees, their tops showing above all other natives of the forest. On the other side of the lake extended an endless tract covered by hard wood timber, consisting of maple, elm and basswood with some oak and white ash with here and there a hickory or a butternut tree.

To the experienced woodman the character and appearance of the trees is a sure indication of the nature of the soil and, although the excursions made from the shore of the lake into the woods were necessarily short, sufficient was noticed to show that a very fine portion of the country had been discovered ; a district that, by its excellency, would attract settlers as soon as its value was known and the land was surveyed.

Having sailed to the upper end of the lake, where a clear and beautiful river entered, Col. Adams returned, coasting along the other side where the country was found to be more rolling in its character and drained by many streams that flowed into the lake, which was difficult to explore on account of the number of islands and the many large bays that extended far inland and generally received a stream, sometimes of a considerable size. On one of the larger islands the Col. was astonished to find traces of the presence of a man, who had not long before been encamped in a most lovely situation. The soft, feathery spruce branches that had formed his bed were still

there ; the remains of the camp fire were also visible. The solitary individual had evidently been employed in curing venison, which process had been performed by cutting the meat into thin slices and then drying them by smoke. As deer were then in high condition no doubt the considerate hunter had thought it a good time to provide what would supply his wants when game would be out of season. The antlers of several deer were lying at no great distance from the camp ground and the wings and feathers of ducks, partridges and wild geese showed that the fare of the recluse had been varied and abundant. The heads of some large salmon trout arrested the attention of the Col. as he had not known that trout were to be found in the lake. The islands seemed to be a favorite resort for deer, for not only had they herbs and plants for food, fresh by the water's edge, but they were unmolested by wolves in their secure retreat. The berries that grew in profusion on the islands had also attracted many partridges, and at that season of the year the rice beds were alive with ducks of every variety, while in the early morning frequent heavy plunges in the water, showed that large fish were numerous and over all the gathering of wild life there rested that quietness and serenity so agreeable to a lover of nature and an inhabitant of the undisturbed woods and waters of the wilderness.

When Col. Adams returned he found that good progress

had been made in the erection of the shanty ; the walls, which were partly up, were soon completed ; the roof was formed of basswood troughs, the openings stuffed with moss taken from the woods. A floor of split cedar was easily made ; a small box was opened and a few panes of glass were produced ; some pieces of cedar were formed into a rude sash and a very good substitute for a window provided and fitted into the opening that had been made in the wall for its reception. A block was cut with an axe from the butt of a straight grained cedar tree and split into thin pieces, afterwards dressed with a drawing knife and a very good door constructed. When a good fire was kindled in the chimney and the door closed on the cool night air, the change from the small tent proved most satisfactory and comforting. As a couple of teams would have to be sent in with supplies, as soon as there was snow on the ground and ice on the streams, a stable had to be erected, but this was quickly done. The next work to be performed was that of underbrushing. A square of about sixteen acres was marked out by blazing the trees on the lines and the work of cutting and piling the small trees was commenced, a labour more easily performed than when the ground is covered by snow.

CHAPTER IV.

October had tinged the leaves of the great forest with red and brown, the beech trees had dropped their rich showers of ripe nuts, and vast numbers of red and black squirrels were enjoying the feast that nature had provided, and keeping up an incessant chattering in the woods. The tops of the maples were becoming bare of leaves and the dark red foliage of the oaks along the river showed that the frosts had already shed the blood of their summer life.

Ducks and geese were gathering in flocks on the lake, preparing to go south ; fallen leaves were floating and sailing on the forest streams, and everything indicated that winter was approaching. About this time two of the Col.'s men arrived in a birch bark canoe bringing news from home and a supply of good things to eat, also some winter clothing and blankets. The men were strong young fellows, who had come to assist the Col. in making and surveying a road from the shanty to the settlement, which was about sixty miles distant. Rain had been falling for some hours and the men were quite wet on their arrival and were glad of a shelter and a fire. Rain continued to fall during the night and the withered leaves in the forest were so wet that they gave forth no rustling sound when trodden upon. In the morning the Col. took his rifle and suc-

ceeded in shooting a couple of deer during the forenoon, then leaving his rifle with Jake, advised that a number of deer should be taken when a fall of snow gave an opportunity for tracking. On the first fine morning Col. Adams and his men took their departure ; each was provided with a pair of warm blankets, provisions for a few days and each carried a good sharp axe. The Irishman would willingly have accompanied his master, but Andy's experience in the woods was not sufficient to fit him for such an expedition, and besides his presence was required at the shanty in the woods.

At the Lodge in the wilderness, time passed slowly. The weather became colder and the nights longer. The young men who had accompanied Col. Adams had left their gun and canoe at the shanty and the Irishman's love of sport was gratified on the river as well as on the shore, and he soon became so expert and confident that his ambition prompted him to accompany his companion on a deer hunt, as soon as fresh snow gave an opportunity for tracking.

One evening Jake went to the door of the cabin several times and looked out in the darkness but made no remark, coming in from making a third or fourth observation, he inquired of Andy if he had any bullets that would fit his gun. The reply was that the boys had left a few with other ammunition. Jake then advised that the gun barrel should be cleaned

and the lock oiled, as snow was falling fast. Taking down the rifle he proceeded to put it in proper order and get everything ready for an early start.

Before the light of morning had moved the gloom in the forest, the two men stood outside of the cabin equipped for the expedition. A few inches of snow covered the ground and the air was serene. When the day broke many tracks of rabbits, foxes and other night wandering animals could be noticed. The loose snow was shaken from the loaded branches of the evergreen trees by partridges as they flew with a whirring sound through the thick woods, red squirrels came forth from their hollow trees to chatter on the branches and their huge black cousins also appeared flaunting their tails as they leaped from one tree to another. For some hours no deer tracks could be noticed ; at length on the bank of the creek, not far from the beaver meadow, the foot prints of some large creature were discerned a short distance ahead. Great was the astonishment of the hunters to find that the tracks were those of a man. The foot was well formed and the steps long and free. The wanderer was evidently possessed of wonderful activity as he had leaped across the creek at a single bound where the stream was too broad to be passed by any one but a most agile man. It was also noticed that he had selected a course through the woods with wonderful skill, at the same time keeping an

almost direct way westward. Although the footsteps showed the print of a well made moccasin, it was evident that the man was not an Indian, but no idea could be formed of his business or his destination.

Nothing seemed to surprise Jake. And the volatile Irishman soon forgot his astonishment, and perhaps his alarm, by coming suddenly on the trail of several deer which was followed for some hours, without success. It was past mid-day when the hunters arrived on the bank of the creek that they had crossed in the morning and here, where water could be had, they concluded to rest and dine. So brushing the loose snow from a log they sat down quite unconscious that in the close cover of the evergreen bushes on the other side of the stream, the three deer that they had been following were quietly concealed. When through eating, Jake rose and advanced to the creek to procure a drink, at this moment the Irishman was astonished to observe a strange, shadowy object with large ears gazing from the opposite thicket. In a state of the greatest excitement, and with a trembling hand, Andy fired and the deer fell. The prize was a splendid one and as the hunters were tired they proceeded at once to the cabin with the game, Andy declaring that on the next excursion he should be permitted to carry the rifle as he had proved that he was the more expert hunter.

CHAPTER V.

Col. Adams and his assistants reached the settlement in due time, having marked out the course of a road which work consisted chiefly in selecting the route and in barking or blazing the trees along the proper line, and in removing such small trees as stood in the way. Several streams had to be crossed, sometimes a fallen tree served as a bridge and where a river was deep and wide a few cedar poles were soon placed together in the water, forming a raft on which the men crossed. As there would be snow on the ground and ice on the rivers when the party returned, a stream would prove no obstruction, for the frosts of a Canadian winter make it not only possible, but, safe and easy to pass with loaded teams over lake, river and marsh.

On the shore of a creek about half way to the settlement Col. Adams and his men halted for a day or two, in order to prepare a shelter for the teams that would be used in the winter to take in supplies. A small and hastily constructed cabin was also made, in which the drivers could spend a night when occasion required that they should do so. This done, the party pushed on to the settlement without waiting to perform any work on the way, the men having procured fresh supplies, afterwards returning to complete the road.

Mrs. Adams was a fine looking woman and her two daughters inherited much of her appearance, courage, originality and self-reliance. Some time after his return, Col. Adams had been describing the lake in the woods and the nature of the country on the shores, when Ermina, the elder daughter, requested her father to tell them something about the strange man of whom he had observed traces somewhere about the lake.

"I believe," said the Col. gravely, "that there is a ghost in the woods."

Both the young ladies opened their eyes widely.

"But," continued the Col., "the spirit still walks with the body, for you know, girls, that a real ghost would not shoot deer, catch fish and wild geese, or sleep on spruce branches, or select the most beautiful and romantic spot ever discovered in which to make his forest home."

"If you have not altogether destroyed our romance," said Ermina, "you have at least changed the direction of our thoughts, and must tell what you really think of the strange wanderer, is he deranged, is he a criminal or a real wild man?"

"A most difficult matter to decide," replied the Col., "considering the very slight knowledge we possess. The man is skillful with his rifle, is a good hunter, makes his camp in a sensible manner, seems to understand and to enjoy comfort.

He may be disturbed in his mind, but I do not think so ; he is evidently no criminal ; he may be accused unjustly, or may have suffered some great injury, and in consequence become dissatisfied with the world ; he may be a naturalist engaged in studying the habits of wild creatures, or what is more likely, he may be a hunter who loves the excitement and retirement afforded by the great forests and takes pleasure in wandering in his canoe on the quiet waters of lonely lakes and wild rivers where flowers bloom unobserved, and birds sing in the summer mornings, heard for the first time by human ear."

"How romantic," said Ermina with a slight blush ; "I wonder if he is young ; perhaps he is a disappointed lover like Goldsmith's Edwin."

"The man cannot live in the woods always," said the prudent Mrs. Adams, who had entered the room ; "his clothes will become worn out, his ammunition will be expended and his supply of provisions will become exhausted ; he cannot live upon flesh entirely, especially in early summer when game is out of season."

"Very true," replied Col. Adams ; "if the man is a hunter he will sometimes seek the settlement to dispose of his furs and obtain such articles as he may require, and as we start for the woods in a short time we may learn something more about this strange character. In the woods the snows of winter re-

tain the traces of every living thing that touches the surface, and unless the adventurer moves further into the unsettled wilderness continual concealment is impossible."

"I do not approve of your determination to go so far away in such a season of the year," said Mrs. Adams; "without a road, too; you might break through the ice or cut your foot; I am not afraid of sickness as you are never ill."

"Do not fear, good wite," replied the Col.; "accidents are usually the result of carelessness or want of thought, and where little help can be procured there is generally much caution practiced."

CHAPTER VI.

It was now well on in December, the lake in the woods was covered by strong ice, over which the wolves were wont to race in the moonlight and howl for their own amusement; snow had fallen to a depth of eight or ten inches, the work of underbrushing had been completed and the men were now engaged in taking down the larger trees, piling the brush and in cutting the trunks into suitable lengths. Squirrels raced on the fallen timber, partridges picked the buds from the tops of the ironwood and the birches, rabbits sought the shelter of the

brush piles where they could feed and sleep undisturbed by their enemy the lynx.

One fine morning Jake opened a small box and took from the interior a fish line and some hooks ; Andy looked on with some interest and at length asked his companion if he was going to fish. It had not occurred to Andy that fishing could be practiced when the ground was covered by snow and the rivers and lakes by ice. The Irishman supposed that a trial would be made in the open water below the falls, and was astonished when his companion cut a hole in the ice of the lake where the water was deep. Having given the fish time to recover from any alarm that was excited by the motion and disturbance of the water, caused by cutting the hole ; a well baited hook was quietly dropped through the opening into the deep water below. In a short time there was a severe tug at the line and a very good salmon trout was brought to the surface and cast on the ice. In those undisturbed waters fish were exceedingly numerous and great numbers could be taken by those who understood the method of capture. For a time Andy looked with some disfavor on what he considered an unsportsman like practice of fishing through the ice, but when a large trout was served for supper his ideas underwent a change, and he appreciated the advantage of having such a resource so conveniently

situated, for having lived for some weeks on bread, bacon and venison, the trout, as a change was found delicious.

It was Christmas eve at the shanty in the woods, as well as elsewhere ; a fine clear night. The wolves were having their usual concert on the ice and the great owl, from his roost on the hemlock tree, was at intervals adding a few sounds to the wild music. A fine fire of rock maple and ironwood was blazing in the chimney of the house in the forest, but the two men who were the inmates sat in silence, perhaps they were tired, as during the early part of the day they had been engaged in hauling large bundles of hay from the stacks on hand sleighs, as Col. Adams, with two men and some ox teams, was expected to arrive that week and some hay was required for the oxen.

While Christmas amongst friends is usually a time of festivity and enjoyment, Christmas in solitude causes despondency from contrast with other days, and continued retirement was beginning to depress even the high spirits of the genial Irishman who, at length, rose from his seat, lighted his pipe, and remarked that he thought it would be interesting to go out and listen to the wolves, "for," said he ; "any company is better than silence and solitude on Christmas eve when all the world is in a state of enjoyment and all Ireland is in raptures."

When standing outside conversing about the possible arrival of Col. Adams, in course of a few days, the men became interested in a strange far off sound in the forest, faint and only heard at intervals, and while listening intently, they thought that they heard voices, and, at length, clearly distinguished the magic word "haw". "Here they are!" shouted the Irishman, at once starting on a run to meet the teams, while Jake, less excitable, proceeded to open the stable door, place abundance of hay in the rude manger and prepare a place where the tired oxen could rest in comfort. In a few minutes the tall erect figure of Col. Adams could be distinguished in the gloom walking ahead of the teams, selecting the proper road. Soon the oxen were taken care of and the party assembled by the bright fire and proceeded to answer questions and relate adventures.

"Did you bring any whiskey with you?" enquired the Irishman of one of the teamsters, but in a voice loud enough to be heard by all.

"Yes, Andy," replied the Col.; "at least there is some brandy."

"O!" said Andy; "we should keep that for the pudding to-morrow."

"But where is the pudding?" said the Col.

"St. Patrick!" said Andy; "did you bring no pudding, and it Christmas time!"

"Never mind, Andy," was the reply ; "there is plenty of beef on the sleigh and we shall have a royal roast, but it will be necessary to place the meat in some place of safety lest the wolves make a feast without caring whether it is Christmas or not."

"Well," said Andy ; "I am sorry that there is no pudding, but the kettle is boiling and here are the glasses and the sugar."

When the small bottle had been nearly emptied Col. Adams sent one of the men to bring in a box. The Col. removed the lid and took out a large round object of portly size wrapped in a cloth. Andy eyed the thing suspiciously, and at length enquired what it was. Col. Adams said innocently that if it was boiled he believed that it would be the finest plum pudding in the world.

"O !" said Andy ; "and all our brandy used ; I have a mind to throw the pudding away."

"I wonder what this is?" said the Col. ; taking out a bottle so like the other that Andy turned quickly round to see if the first bottle was still on the table, and finding that it was, he said that he would make both the pudding and the brandy pay for this joke to-morrow, and enquired if the men would assist him to raise the large quarters of beef to a place on the roof of the stable, which was the only safe spot available.

In a few days Col. Adams and Andy returned to the settlement while the men who remained prepared to erect a large addition to the cabin in order to afford accommodation to Mrs. Adams and her daughters, who were expected to arrive when the teams returned towards spring. One yoke of oxen remained at the woods to haul hay and logs for the erection of other buildings, and although there were only three men the work was soon well advanced, as material was convenient and the men experienced and skilful. The log walls of the new building had been raised and a roof of basswood troughs provided ; spaces between the logs had been closed with moss and a floor of split cedar laid down and levelled with a sharp adze. Before the house was quite ready Col. Adams and his family arrived in sleighs with the two span of horses, having started sooner than was at first purposed, lest heavy falls of snow should interfere with their progress.

The large shanty, newly erected, was divided into rooms by heavy curtains, which could be drawn aside during the day, permitting the heat from the great stove to warm up the entire space. It was astonishing with what dexterity and dispatch the ladies put things in order ; what a home-like appearance was given to the rude dwelling, although there was little or no furniture in the house ; meals were well cooked and regularly served and an air of comfort pervaded the entire establishment.

The Col. was everywhere and his presence and directions gave confidence to the men, system to their employment and success to their efforts.

It had been determined to have that portion of the country surveyed, as soon as the snow would disappear in the spring, and advantage was taken of the road made by Col. Adams in order to bring in supplies for the use of the men to be engaged in the forest, consequently teams continually arrived from the settlement and the track was kept well beaten.

One fine morning Col. Adams directed Andy and another man to take the oxen and sleigh and go up the ice to a point about half a mile distant, and there enter the woods and follow a blazed line until they reached an elevation a few hundred yards from the shore, where good sand could be found, a supply of which would be required for plastering buildings when the proper time arrived.

"How will I know where to begin to dig?" inquired the man. "Col. Adams replied that he would notice a picket at the end of the blazed line and at the place named he could remove the snow and he would find an excellent deposit of sand a little below the surface, and, continued the Col., you may perhaps find a family of wood-chucks as you dig, if so do not kill or disturb the poor things, but leave their burrow unmolested."

"If you please, Col.," said Andy, "do you know where all the beasts of the forest live, because if you do I would like a skin from which to manufacture a new cap?"

"Very well Andy," said the Col., "do you see that large basswood; if you will cut that down you may obtain skins enough to make many caps."

"Raccoons," said Jake.

The Col. nodded.

Although a profound mystery to Andy the matter was quite plain to those who knew the observing character of the Col. and the habits of the animals that he was speaking about. When walking in the woods he had noticed good building sand, a little of which had been brought to the surface by a couple of wood-chucks when preparing their winter quarters and in digging nothing was more likely than the little hermits would be discovered. Raccoons always come out of the hollow trees in which they spend the winter, in March, and then take a run on the crusted snow and afterwards return to shelter. The Col. had simply observed tracks upon the snow and had noticed that the traces led to a certain tree the bark of which was scratched by the sharp claws of the animals as they climbed to an opening that was large enough to provide an entrance to the hollow within.

Having discovered the wood-chucks at the sand pit, Andy's confidence in the Colonel's knowledge of woodcraft was sufficiently increased to cause him to investigate the hollow tree and three raccoons were captured.

CHAPTER VII.

The days now became longer and the sun warmer, with every sign that spring was approaching; all hands were engaged in making troughs to be used in the sugar bush.

In one of the intervals of work Col. Adams was noticed in the act of looking earnestly on the snow which was now commencing to melt beneath the heat of the sun."

"What has he got now," said Andy, "it's a fly, surely he cannot make a fortune out of that thing, but he looks as serious as if he had found a gold mine."

The next morning the Col. directed that a yoke of oxen and sleigh should be taken to the woods where the men were working. The Col. himself took an axe and proceeded to cut down a tree, with great care, cutting wholly from one side, in order that the tree might drop gently on the snow that would receive it as softly as possible. Andy and the others were informed that a bee-tree had been discovered and that it was

intended to secure the bees, which would stick to their hive, no matter where it was situated. After the place of entrance and exit had been closely covered with wire gauze secured by a few tacks driven into the wood, the fallen tree was cut through with a cross-cut saw, on each side of the hive and the portion of the log was placed on the sleigh and taken to the house, where it was set on one end in a convenient place. The bees were quite uninjured and in a week or two, when the snow had disappeared, commenced to gather pollen from the tree buds and sip the sweet sap which flowed from the maple trees that had been tapped. Andy was delighted with the last achievement of his master and considered the capture of the bees as an exceedingly wonderful undertaking.

The sugar bush was Andy's favorite resort, in the early morning, all day, and particularly in the evening. The great quantities of delicious sap in the large kettles, the pleasant sound of the drops falling into the troughs far off and near by amongst the maples, the fragrant odor of the scattered evergreen trees, touched by the breath of spring, the fire light on the overhanging foliage and the pleasing note of the sugar owl, the evening song of the returned robin and all the varied sounds of approaching summer with the first flowers of the forest on the sunny slopes, made the sugar bush a most pleasing portion of a very beautiful wilderness.

In a remarkably short time the winter had quite disappeared, the buds swelled on the trees, the songs of many birds were heard in the woods, the wild fruit trees put on their wealth of blossoms, the lake, now clear of ice, raised its rippling wavelets to the sunshine, flocks of wild fowl splashed or sailed on the clear water or disturbed the evening air with their rapid wings.

In the meantime the work of clearing land progressed rapidly, long rows of blazing log heaps illuminated the darkness of the night and quickly dissolved beneath the rage of the fire. Before the new made fields had been fully planted with wheat and corn, the surveyors arrived, in several large canoes and immediately commenced to run lines far into the forest.

With the surveyors was an officer of the law, armed with a warrant for the arrest of a person who was described as a suspicious and dangerous character believed to have escaped from justice. As Sheriff Raven was well acquainted with Col. Adams and an admirer of his elder daughter, it was believed that his visit to the woods was as much with the hope of renewing his acquaintance with the young lady as with the intention of capturing offenders against justice. Sheriff Raven was accompanied by his deputy, who was a positive man exceedingly fond of fishing, but from his general lack of success in catching anything but catfish, Andy nick-named him

Bullhead. The professed object of these officers was to catch the wild man, but as nothing had been heard of that invisible person, the time was chiefly spent in assisting the young ladies in planting a flower garden and occasionally visiting the surveyors' camp, which was several miles distant.

With Andy's aid the girls had nearly completed their flower beds, when, on visiting the ground one morning with some seeds, it was found that the spot had been already planted, besides some rose bushes there were a number of tulips with the original earth still around their roots, the plants so vigorous that they gave promise of soon being in bloom.

Great was the astonishment and delight of the young ladies and believing that their visitors had planned a surprise, on the return of these persons they were approached with thanks and complimented on their taste and skill in flower culture. The men were surprised and said that they had planted no flowers, having none to plant, and as the surveyors were all far away in the woods, attending to their duties, they could have nothing to do with the mystery.

Andy, who was at work in another portion of the garden, where the earth had been loosened with a hoe and rake, raised his head and exclaimed in an excited tone of voice: "The wild man of the woods has been here. I would know the print of his moccasin anywhere."

On examining the footprints and learning of the mysterious appearance of the flowers and bushes in the garden, Col. Adams believed that the stranger from the forest had provided the plants and that perhaps a small cultivated garden in some retired spot might be one of his possessions, from which he had good naturedly brought some roots that he supposed would give pleasure to the girls in their partial solitude. The presence of the flowers also showed that the stranger was much better acquainted with the movements of the settlers than the settlers were with the wanderer.

Believing that they had now some trace of the person that they were in search of, the two officers determined to seek for the outlaw, as they were pleased to term the man of the woods.

Col. Adams discouraged the proceeding and refused to say on what island he had noticed traces of the stranger the summer before, nor did he at all approve of disturbing a man who had seemingly done no harm, and was apparently disposed to be peaceable, but who, if aroused to hostilities, might prove a dangerous enemy. The two officers, undeterred by expostulations, proceeded to examine the shores and islands of the lake in the large birch bark canoe, which had carried them up the river from the distant settlement.

CHAPTER VIII.

Some distance below the outlet of the lake, where the river had broken through the wall of rock, and nearly at the brink of the falls, there was a spot of level ground almost surrounded by walls of stone and overgrown with balsam and other evergreen trees and open only on the side next the river, which had there a swift and dangerous current. Amongst the trees a small tent was pitched and a graceful birch canoe rested on the still water of the eddy, entirely concealed by overhanging bushes and uprising rocks; a fire was burning on the shore, the smoke mingling with the spray from the falls down which the wild and swollen river rushed with continuous roar. The canoe was tied to a tree and a well made and springy maple paddle lay in its proper place in the canoe, but no one was visible. How any one could reach such a spot was a mystery, as above on the swift river was an almost perpendicular wall of rock and below were the rushing rapids. As a place of safety or concealment the situation was perfect and apparently unapproachable.

One fine morning, Miss Adams and her sister were induced to go for a short sail on the still waters of the lake. The young ladies were asked if they would like to visit a small rocky island a short distance down the river, where it was understood many

rare wild flowers were in bloom. The invitation was declined but notwithstanding the protest of the girls, the canoe was turned in the direction. As the island was approached it was found that the current was much stronger than had been expected, and again the ladies urged a return. The men seemed to think that their skill was doubted and continued to proceed. With some difficulty a landing was effected but the girls, who were now considerably alarmed, refused to leave the canoe, even the men had their nerves somewhat shaken by the unexpected swiftness of the river and the loud roar of the falls, which seemed near at hand. The men were out of humor at being rebuked for seeking a place that was evidently dangerous at a time when the water was high. The branches, covered by blossoms, which had been gathered, were abandoned and preparation was made to return. The river divided on the rocky island and spread out in a strong current on each side, leaving an eddy close to the shore, along this eddy the canoe glided smoothly until the bow caught the fierce downward rush of the river as the water parted on the island, then the canoe at once spun rapidly round with the bow down stream. In paddling with all their might against the current the men became exhausted and finding that they were losing ground, an attempt was made to cross the channel to the main land, but again the canoe turned by the force of the stream and refusing

to obey the unskillful efforts of the steersman it ran wild, escaping from all control and was quickly in the strong grasp of the river. All command was lost and all hope was over. Raven, in despair, threw himself prostrate with his arms on the cross-bar of the canoe, while the others sat in silence with their eyes fixed on the surging and rushing waters of the rapids which they were about to enter. At this moment a large dog, in a violent state of excitement, appeared on a projecting rock near the little grove of balsams and the next instant a man in a small Indian canoe shot suddenly from the concealment of the ever-green bushes, which appeared to hide some cavity in the rock. The strange canoe seemed to glide like a spirit so amazing was the speed with which it rushed, and in a moment it was beside the runaway. The mysterious person stepped lightly into the stern letting his own canoe go, and with a few powerful and skillful strokes of the strong paddle he turned the large canoe with the bow down stream and in an instant the wild rapids were around the frail but buoyant bark and almost hopeless occupants. The strange steersman was tall, somewhat slender, but lithe in form, rapid in his movements, seemingly possessed of amazing energy and activity, his eyes dark, quick and keen ; he was without hat or coat and with soft moccasins on his feet, permitting the most subtle movement of his muscular toes that prevented him from being thrown off his bal-

ance. As the canoe bounded amongst the breakers ; sometimes he stood erect, watching ahead, sometimes his body swayed gracefully as with coolness and skill he guided the canoe past dangerous rocks or sent it rapidly onward before vigorous strokes of the long paddle, through the bursting foam and over the curling crests of the swelling waves. The bark was nearly half full of water, but with that buoyancy for which these canoes are celebrated, it still rode the swells and was partly kept from overturning by the steersman, who had dropped on his knees and first on one side then on another, with much skill and steadiness he pressed the rising waves with the flat side of his paddle as the canoe showed danger of upsetting. Quite suddenly and unexpectedly, as it seemed, the nearly submerged canoe turned into smooth water of the eddy and was soon against the bushes that overhung the margin of the swollen river.

The change of motion threw some of the party off the little balance that they had in the nearly sunken canoe, which immediately shot from under those whom it had carried through so much danger, but bushes were within the reach of all. The stranger was already in such a position that although up to his arm pits in water, he could assist one after another to scramble to the shore, which they did without difficulty. For a moment each person looked at another as if to be assured that all were there.

Miss Adams, who, notwithstanding her drenched condition and the danger which she had encountered, seemed remarkably calm, enquired of the stranger if he were the wild man of the woods?

The young man smiled, and replied, that he believed that he was known by that title.

"Had it not been for your courage and skill," remarked the lady, "we would most certainly have been drowned."

"It was most providential," replied the stranger, "that I was in a position to render some assistance;" then turning to the sheriff, and for the first time showing excitement, he exclaimed, "How dare you, sir, take these ladies into a place of such danger and expose them to almost certain death by your folly and stupidity?"

"Young man," said the sheriff, fiercely, "be good enough to keep your impertinent remarks for the ears of others, you do not seem to know me, and were it not for the services that you have rendered these ladies who were alarmed by an accident, we would not part so easily."

The stranger turned his unabashed eyes on the indignant officer and said firmly: "If ever you dare to take these young ladies out on the water again I will shoot you for a blockhead."

" Silence, sir," said the sheriff, and nodding to his assistant, he attempted to grasp the hunter by the arm, but quick as lightning the young man eluded the seizure, and tossed first one assailant and then another into the river, as if they had been feathers. Struggling to their feet in the water, frantic with rage, the men attempted to dash out of the river, but were promptly confronted by a new danger ; a large dark colored dog with sharp looking teeth and a fierce growl, stood ready and seemed very willing to tear them to pieces if they advanced a step, and as the men dare not leave the water they proceeded to use bad language.

The hunter turned towards the young ladies and with much dignity and composure told them that their father, the Col., was approaching with assistance, and as they were now quite safe, he would bid them adieu.

The girls turned, when they heard their father named, and when they looked again the stranger had disappeared.

" Our friend, the wild man, must be a spirit after all," said Ermina ; " for he has the power of becoming invisible at will."

" And," replied Mary ; " he can also become visible at a time when his presence is very much required."

In a few moments the dog had also disappeared, and the

crestfallen officers crawled out of the water in the most ungraceful manner possible.

When a good-natured man is aroused to anger his passion is always strong, and Col. Adams was furious as he quickly understood that the girls had been taken by the canoe in a direction contrary to their wishes, and he so severely rebuked the already enraged officers that all friendship was at an end, and the drenched and mortified men took an immediate and unceremonious departure to the camp of the surveyors.

Conducting his daughters to the house, where their comfort could be attended to, Col. Adams went in search of the stranger who had rendered such valuable assistance, but could find no trace of the mysterious adventurer, nor could the Col. understand how a canoe could, without overturning, come through such a commotion of waters as he saw rushing before him ; neither for some time could he comprehend where the stranger came from, when he appeared so suddenly in his canoe. A close and careful examination of the shore at the head of the falls showed the small spot partly encircled by rocks and covered by bushes which had been the camping ground of the recluse, but the tent and other possessions had already been removed although a small fire was still burning brightly against the cliff.

CHAPTER IX.

Following closely on the footsteps of the surveyors there arrived a few settlers, the most adventurous of their class. These proceeded to occupy farms as near the falls as land could be obtained.

A number of millwrights also made their appearance and immediately engaged in the construction of a saw and grist mill, the machinery for which had been brought in during the winter, and as the timber had been already prepared the frame of the building was soon ready to be put together, but the summer was far advanced before the river was sufficiently low to permit of the dam being made and the flumes constructed. The saw mill was started as soon as possible, and the first work performed by the new machinery was that of providing plank with which to complete the flumes and dam, and boards for roofing and enclosing the mills. Settlers sometimes came after lumber to be used as floors for their shanties and the busy little saw mill had all the work that it could do. A small shop had been erected and a blacksmith engaged to manufacture the various portions of the iron work required about the mills. A good-natured French Canadian had opened a small store and as settlers had established themselves at intervals along the road leading to the front, the little village at the mill soon became the centre of a considerable settlement.

Although a number of small clearings had been made, little else than Indian corn and potatoes had been planted, for these are ever the products of new fields in a bush country, and although the openings in the forest were connected only by blazed lines, through the woods, there was amongst the people that novelty, romance, serenity and enjoyment that is always felt under similar circumstances.

Autumn was approaching when one evening a teamster from the front arrived with a wagon load of goods, for the store, and also brought word that a minister in connection with the Methodist Church would hold service on Sunday ; as this was to be the first visit of a clergyman, considerable sensation was caused by the announcement. As there was no building large enough to accommodate the people it was decided that services should be held in the open air, beneath the lofty maples on the margin of the river. A few loads of lumber from the saw mill were provided for the construction of a platform for the accommodation of the minister and the singers, while the remainder of the plank placed on logs were to serve as seats for the congregation.

On Sabbath morning the sun rose brightly and early in the forenoon the settlers commenced to gather, dressed in holiday attire, and looking much better than they usually appeared, when dressed in their working clothes ; children approached

with bunches of wild flowers in their hands, proud of their best dresses and the bright ribbons which adorned their hats. The fine parlor organ, carried by strong men, was brought from the Col.'s home, which was at no great distance, and was placed on the platform. Miss Adams, looking radiant, stepped forward, arranged the music and took a seat close by. In a short time the minister arrived ; a tall, elderly man, mounted on a good grey horse, with a portmanteau strapped to the saddle ; he rode deliberately beneath the foliage of the lofty trees and when he had dismounted, Andy led the horse to the stable. The minister shook hands with a few old acquaintances, glanced at the audience with a pleased smile and took his place on the platform ; after kneeling a moment he opened the hymn book and for the first time, in these grand old woods, the pleasing and solemn sounds of Old Hundred were heard, and all the more felt and appreciated as those present had been long without the public ordinances to which they had been accustomed in other days, and happy were those sons of toil to find that the words of the gospel had followed and found them in the dim recesses of the woods.

In one of the intervals during service, Miss Adams, from her place at the organ, where she sat with her face to the audience, noticed a very little girl who seemed to have formed a strange friendship with a large dog. The little lady fearlessly

pulled about her rough companion, which seemed to enjoy the romp. A friend of the child fearing for her safety, somewhat hastily attempted to remove the girl causing her to utter an exclamation of disapproval. The great dog at once took the child under his protection and, by unmistakable signs of hostility, caused the man to draw back. The little girl was delighted that she was permitted to renew her play and, either through fear or not wishing to cause disturbance, no one interfered for some time. At length a form moved quietly and quickly forward from the shadow of the overhanging trees and taking up the little girl in his arms he placed her on her mother's knee and immediately retired, accompanied by the dog. There was no mistaking the tall and lithe figure, the easy and almost invisible movement, nor was the dog remembered by the few who had before seen him, and it was evident that the wild man had for a brief time made one of the assembly, but he was noticed no more during the day.

CHAPTER X.

The fine weather of September had arrived and the new wild life of the year was all abroad in the woods and on the waters ; beautiful brown partridges in coveys were seen everywhere amongst the berry bushes, wild ducks, the flocks still unbroken, were amongst the rice along the margin of the lake and river ; deer were in high condition and many settlers complained that raccoons and bears were making wild work in the cornfields, for in very new districts animals from the woods sometimes prove an inconvenience. On some of the islands in the lake and on low ground near the outlet of the smaller streams there was a considerable number of wild orchard trees, and as fruit is usually scarce in recently formed settlements, a small party was organized to search for plums. The large birch bark canoe was prepared, and under the command of Col. Adams himself, the excursionists were soon spending the pleasant hours of the early morning in passing gently on the still water between the beautiful groves of trees that covered the shores of the lake or made the islands look like gigantic flower pots set in the clear calm water. The party had been some time on the lake when, on turning a point of land amongst the islands, a birch canoe was noticed gliding silently but quickly with that wild grace for which these canoes are dis-

tinguished when directed by a skilful hand. The motion seemed to be more the result of previous action than present exertion, and the stranger was earnestly observing those who were approaching. By an almost imperceptible movement the bow of the canoe was turned and the man of the woods was quickly recognized. As the strange person had several times before mysteriously disappeared, it was expected that he would retire; he, however, showed no disposition to do so, but gracefully saluted the party and enquired if they were searching for plums. When informed that they were, but had not yet been successful, he said that it would give him pleasure to guide them to a place where there was a prospect of obtaining a supply if the bears had not found out the fruit and destroyed it.

“In that case,” said the Col.; “the better plan will be for you to leave your canoe and take a passage in mine, which is too large for one paddle, and you can assist me.”

Expressing his willingness to accept this arrangement, the stranger turned his canoe to the shore, and having secured it to a tree he took his place in the stern of the larger bark, while the Col. took a place in the bow. The canoe at once felt the influence of the skilful movements of the stranger's paddle, for, although the strokes were given with the utmost ease and without apparent effort, the canoe seemed to become instinct with life and motion. The hunter's dog was evi-

dently much dissatisfied with a plan that separated him from his master, but the good-natured St. Bernard took his way along the shore of the lake, occasionally moving out on a point of land or a fallen tree to make observations. The stranger was silent ; long absence from society had given him a stiffness of utterance, and difficulty of expression that sometimes caused him to make remarks, that although correct enough, did not come up to his idea of proper conversation and made him regret that he had spoken. The feeling was perhaps more the result of extreme sensitiveness than on account of any actual defect in the arrangement of his words, which were generally prompted by good sense and modesty, although occasionally a little confused from lack of intercourse with mankind. As Col. Adams seldom spoke, if he could avoid doing so, when he was in the woods or on the romantic waters of the wilderness, and as the stranger seemed to be of the same disposition, the girls stood but a small chance of being either amused or instructed, and were at length obliged to open the conversation.

“Do you think there is any prospect of us ever getting home again?” enquired Ermina, as she stripped the sleeve from her beautiful arm in order that she might put her hand in the water to pluck a white lilly that floated like a fairy ship amongst its gay and fragrant companions.

"Why not?" enquired the hunter; "is my reputation so bad that you consider yourselves unsafe?"

"Of course," said Ermina, "you are, no doubt, Lord of the Isles in this wilderness, and perhaps make it a business to carry into captivity all romantic damsels who trespass on your magic land, and are we not your prisoners now and liable to be taken to your enchanted castle as you have already possession of our canoe?"

"Not so," said Mary; "I think we were in greater danger when on a former occasion our mysterious friend took possession of our runaway bark and guided it through the rapids, and this reminds me that we have not yet thanked our preserver for his assistance."

"It is his own fault then," said Ermina; "surely he did not expect us to follow him into the wilderness in order to tender our thanks, which I do not think he cares much about or he would have found an opportunity to receive them before this time?"

"Girls," said the Col., "good humoredly, "you take rather a strange method of expressing your gratitude now when you have an opportunity, for your words would lead to the supposition that you are unconscious of the magnitude of the service rendered."

"Not so father," said Ermina, "but the young man himself seems to place no value on his life or the lives of anyone, or he would not have treated the adventure with such indifference or considered our thanks of so little value that they were not worth receiving ; for you know he did not even call to inquire if we recovered from the effects of the fright and soaking that we received ?"

"Young ladies," said the stranger, "if I have failed in courtesy it was because I understood your position and respected your accomplishments, and did not consider the little service that chance put in my power to render, entitled me to intrude on persons so much superior to me in matters which the world considers of grave importance, in social life ; but now," said the hunter, "we will land here and then we have about half a mile to walk before we reach the wild orchard, which is our destination."

A slight movement of the paddle caused the canoe to turn gracefully with the side against a rock that had one edge on the shore and projected its flat surface into the water, forming a little wharf on which all stepped out. The canoe was secured to the branch of a tree that projected over the water, baskets were gathered up. The hunter took his rifle in his hand and was at once joined by the great dog, which seemed delighted to again meet his master. Beneath the waving tops of the

magnificent maples the little party took their way and in a short time the light which showed through the lofty foliage, and seemed to mark the position of a clearing, became stronger, and soon the party entered one of those park-like glades or beaver meadows, so common along the course of creeks that pass through a forest country. The water in the brook was pure, cold and rapid and contained many trout. The fish startled and alarmed at the approach of the intruders rushed from the rapids to deep water, showing the beautiful spots on their speckled sides as they splashed their way down stream. Amongst the long grass of the beaver meadow were many cranberries, fully formed but not yet ripe, and on the low ground between the forest and the meadow, were many wild cherry and several varieties of plum trees which were red and purple with ripe fruit, a portion had fallen to the ground and a family of bears were enjoying a rich feast. The Col. hastily pointed out the black animals, but the hunter showed no disposition to fire, merely directing his dog to drive the creatures away ; on being asked the reason for practicing such unhuntsman-like conduct, he said that nature, in wisdom and kindness, had afforded even the bears life, food and enjoyment and it would be cruel to deprive them of these gratifications which were valuable to the beasts and worthless to him.

"That is strange philosophy for a hunter," said the Col.

"Not at all," remarked the other. "The farmer may sometimes use the flesh of a fat ox, but it would be folly to shoot every beast in a barnyard at one time. The forest is my farm, or cattle yard, and although providence may permit me to provide my food and clothing from the resources of the bush-covered country, it would be poor policy to destroy these resources in a wanton way."

Miss Mary replied, that hitherto she had been under the impression that the man of the woods was dumb or that he only spoke at rare intervals, and under extraordinary circumstances, but she was pleased to find that he could express his opinion so fluently, although his doctrine was somewhat strange.

The Col., who had a keen eye for whatever was beautiful, remarkable or rich in nature, stood gazing in admiration at the heavily loaded fruit trees which made the solitary, but romantic, valley look like a well attended orchard. "There seems," said the Col., "to be much satisfaction enjoyed by those who come unexpectedly on what is valuable or desirable when they can obtain possession without working for the treasure, and, no doubt, the berry picker, the fisherman, the hunter and the miner are all unconsciously moved by this common feeling."

In their excitement the girls would have proceeded at once to fill their baskets with the delicious fruit, but the Col. said

that it was now mid-day, the first thing in order was dinner. One of the metal pails, brought for the double purpose of carrying plums and for making tea, was utilized as a kettle, and partly filled with water from the brook, when a small fire was kindled and an excellent and fragrant cup was supplied to each person, for few articles of food or drink are more valued or prove more refreshing to those in the forest than good tea, which in this instance formed an agreeable addition to the boiled ham, bread, butter and honey that formed the feast.

"I do not much wonder at your fondness for the woods if you have many such beautiful spots as this in your domain," remarked the elder young lady to the hunter, who at this time was apparently making a mental selection of the best fruit trees in sight.

"This spot is, indeed, beautiful," was the reply; "and in the woods and on the waters there is much to please the eye and gratify the mind; there are also many treasures useful to support life in all its varieties; for instance, consider what unlimited quantities of delicious honey exist in the blossoms of the trees of the boundless forests around us, and how wisely nature has acted in providing bees to gather the riches; how perfect is the little creature in every qualification which is required to fit it for industrious employment. The bee flies with amazing swiftness and untiring activity, and searches the blos-

soms with skill and quickness. The bee possesses great carrying power, never loses the way in the vast fields of foliage in which it wanders, and is as skilful in the hive as it is diligent abroad."

"You are nearly as strange as father is about wild things," said Mary; "pray what else does your friend nature provide in the woods for the support of her creatures or is there anything else?"

"Yes," said the hunter; "the immense crop of fast ripening beech nuts, which now load the trees, affords a magnificent feast to whole armies of chipmunks and squirrels, as well as some larger animals; all enjoy the rich repast and during the pleasant autumn weather when falling leaves are covering the ground the sounds of feasting and revelry are heard in every portion of the woods."

"Now," said Ermina; "I do not think you are wicked, but only romantic beyond a reasonable limit. No doubt you fancy yourself Adam in the Garden of Eden, with birds, beasts, flowers, fruit and wild life all around you, but depend upon it, either Satan or Eve will find you out even in this paradise of yours, with all its tranquility and allurements; but our baskets are now full and like the woman with the cruise of oil, we may ask in vain for another vessel; we must,

however, come again for it is a pity that all these delicious plums should go to waste or be eaten by the ugly bears."

"My bright-eyed young lady," said the hunter; "if you come here again be sure that your father is with you, or some one who can protect you, for that old she bear and her cubs might not prove agreeable company for young ladies."

"Well," replied the lady, as she advanced, there is good hopes of Edwin, the hermit, recovering his senses, and perhaps becoming like other people, for he has learned to compliment. Will your majesty of the woods, guide us to the canoe with our treasures; the sun is declining, and it may be that the lord of the isles has not sufficient accommodation for young ladies, should we get lost in his pleasure ground, by night overtaking us," for, said the lady with a smile, "I suppose a few branches and a skin of a wild beast is your only home, and that like the snails, you carry your house on your back."

"Yes," replied the hunter; "my food and lodging are of the simplest kind, and I am never troubled by house cleaning; but you say well the sun is low and the way amongst the islands is easily lost in darkness; you will please remember that I have warned you not to return here unprotected."

"Your laws are strict and contradictory," said Ermina; "at our last meeting you said that if we took companions with us on the lake you would shoot them."

"So I will," said the hunter ; " if on a future occasion I find your companions bears or something worse."

"But," said Miss Mary ; " would you really have shot Raven if we had gone with him again?"

"No," said the recluse ; " not if I thought that either of you cared for his safety ; but as he has as poor an opinion of my affection for him as I have of his courage I trusted that he would hesitate before he would again venture to take you to a place of danger. Is he one of your admirers, Miss Adams?"

"I think he is," said the young lady, frankly, " or rather he might have been had not you and my father frightened him away."

"If you have given him any encouragement he will come back?" remarked the hunter.

"Then," said Miss Adams, firmly, " he is not likely to return ; but where is father ; I hope the bears have not got him? O, here he comes with branches of wild grapes ; how beautiful must this spot be in the spring when all the wild fruit trees are in bloom, the air fragrant and the birds in full chorus, amongst the groves that grow along the brook."

The treasures from the trees were soon placed in the canoe ; all took their places and the light bark moved gracefully over the still surface of the lake, when the stars soon com-

menced to set their shadows on the deep waters and an inverted forest seemed to grow along the margin.

By the time the party had reached the landing place, near the residence of Col. Adams, the new moon had set and although the stars were shining clearly the night was moderately dark. The hunter was still steering, but as the shore was approached he stopped paddling and seemed to listen attentively, then by some mysterious movement of the paddle the speed was suddenly checked and the canoe immediately commenced to move backward from the shore.

"What is the matter?" said the Col.

"There are men on the shore whom I do not wish to meet," was the reply of the hunter."

"Only the mill hands, who have come down to see us return," was the Col.'s remark ; "do not be alarmed."

At the word alarm the canoe was urged quickly to the shore and in a moment lay with its side to the little wharf, which formed the landing place. Several persons had moved forward in the gloom, and took hold of the canoe, when no less a person than Raven, the sheriff, advanced with a pistol in his hand, and ordered the hunter to surrender.

"What is the meaning of this insolence?" roared Col. Adams.

"Let the young ladies get safely to the shore," said the hunter, with much composure. The two girls stepped out and joined their father, who was already on the wharf. The hunter had risen to his feet and stood motionless.

"Now you surrender, hold up your hands?" commanded the sheriff, raising the pistol.

A short sharp sound was uttered by the hunter and at almost the same moment a cry of horror and pain was uttered by one of the sheriff's assistants, who was thrown violently to the ground. The sheriff quickly turned his head in surprise and in an instant the pistol was dashed from his hand and his fingers severely injured by a blow from the hunter's paddle, who, as he gave the stroke, with lightning-like rapidity leaped to the shore and disappeared in the darkness. For a time it was impossible to know what had happened. It was soon discovered that the intended capture had proved a failure and that the sheriff and his officers were all more or less injured. The hunter had found a formidable and successful ally in his powerful St. Bernard dog, which had followed the shore of the lake until he reached the landing place, where, with the sagacity for which that breed of dogs are distinguished, he had remained unobserved in the darkness until his master was attacked, and then at a single word of command he made such a surprise and diversion in the rear that his master, who knew the situation, escaped without difficulty and without injury.

The indignation and excitement of Col. Adams at the treacherous attack, on one who was considered a guest, was for a time inexpressible, and had not a reaction taken place, caused by a violent demonstration made by the mill hands on the defeated officers of the law, it is difficult to understand what would have happened, but as the Col. had to use his influence and authority to restrain the mill men lest there should be murder, he became calm in the effort to calm others.

In the meantime, fearing for their own safety, the officers had made a hasty and ungraceful departure. Early the next morning Col. Adams went in search of the hunter, but the canoe had disappeared and no trace of the man of the woods could be discovered.

CHAPTER XI.

Jerry Moss was foreman in the saw mill, but he had also a farm about a mile from the mill on the shore of the lake, where his wife, her little girl and aged mother resided. Mrs. Moss was an exceedingly active woman, she cultivated her garden, attended to her chickens, milked her cows, kept an eye to the fences and had been much disturbed by the depredations of some wild animal that frequented the woods in the neighborhood. As it was the season for beach nuts, the hogs of the

settlers were enjoying themselves in the woods gathering the treasures that dropped from the trees, and every now and then an animal was missing. Sheep, calves and other young stock were frequently found dead, partly devoured. On one occasion a cow, that seemed to have successfully defended her calf, returned from the forest dreadfully lacerated about the face and blind in an eye. The general impression was that a bear, of unusual fierceness and courage, was prowling in the forest operating only at night, and in most unexpected places, and what was surprising, the beast had never been seen.

One fine day Miss Adams and her sister had arranged to visit Mrs. Moss, see the little girl, who was a great favorite, talk to the old lady, and spend the afternoon.

Jerry had been at home for a few days gathering his Indian corn, and was to return to the mill that evening. A little before sunset Mrs. Moss informed her husband that in the morning she had removed the bell from the neck of the leading cow, as the strap was defective and she was afraid that the bell might be lost. The cows had not come home that evening, and she asked him to go towards the beaver meadow and try and find them ; " for," said she ; " there are no flies in the woods now and the cattle are less particular about returning than formerly."

"I hope that I will not have to go all the way to the beaver meadow," replied Jerry ; "for I have still some baskets of corn cobs to gather, and I promised to see the girls through the woods before dark."

"I wish you would go now for the cows," said Mrs. Moss ; "you know that the bears killed the pig, and who knows but a calf may be taken next."

"No fear," said Jerry ; "Brindle would fight any beast in the woods that would attempt to molest her beloved baby, which she thinks is the finest calf in the world."

"The safest way is to get the cows," said Mrs. Moss ; "the girls will wait a while, and I will carry in the corn, and be sure, Jerry, that you take your gun with you."

"The gun is of no use," said Jerry ; "I lost the flint and have neglected to get a new one."

"I think," said Mrs. Moss ; "that you will have to go all the way to the meadow. A quantity of hay has been left unstacked in ricks and the cattle have found it out as the fence is down."

On approaching the meadow Jerry was quickly aware that something was wrong ; the cows and other cattle were in a most excited condition and showed signs of terror, and seemed engaged in protecting the calves from some imaginary danger, for Jerry could see no cause for alarm. He had climbed the

fence that was constructed of small logs, and was moving into the meadow, when he heard a slight noise behind him, and looking quickly around he saw a large unknown animal, possessed of great length of body on the fence, in the act of leaping towards him ; fortunately, as the beast sprang, the upper log of the fence rolled over and the animal fell ; having become discouraged, or suspicious, it did not continue the attack, although seemingly much inclined to do so. In meantime Jerry rushed behind one of the hay ricks and threw a quantity of the withered grass in the air. at the same time shouting loudly. The beast had evidently been defeated in the attempt to catch a calf, and although it did not approach, it continued to move in a circle at a little distance uttering such yells as might have appalled the boldest man. It occurred to Jerry that if he could set the hay on fire he would be safe, at least for a time ; with a steel and flint such as every smoker carried, he succeeded in kindling a piece of tinder and with the aid of some dry grass from the rick he soon set the whole on fire. While the terrified man was busy the beast had approached very near, but the bright light of the burning hay caused the creature to draw off. The cattle immediately advanced towards the fire, for all animals that have been protected from mosquitoes by smoke have a fondness for burning material, and think that safety from other attacks can be se-

cured. The fire was kept up by carrying burning grass from one rick to another, and although the beast disappeared, Jerry knew well that it was somewhere in the vicinity.

As Jerry Moss did not return, Miss Adams and her sister, fearing that their mother would be alarmed at their absence, started for home; Mrs. Moss accompanying them a short distance on the way. There was a little moonlight excepting when the orb was concealed by clouds and the girls felt little fear, as a young dog was with them, but before parting, Mrs. Moss warned them to keep the pup near them as they would pass at no great distance from the carcase of the pig that had been killed by a bear, some days before, and as a large trap had been set to catch the marauder, the dog would be in danger if it approached the place.

On entering the woods the girls found the night much darker than had been expected, and for the first time they regretted their rashness in venturing on the pathway through the woods at a time when it was known that some animal of unusual ferocity was committing depredations, and had lately visited the very spot which they were passing. Suddenly the most horrible and alarming sounds broke the stillness of the night. The noise was evidently made by some creature in dire distress and seemed to express pain, fear and anger. Almost immediately a second and more horrible uproar took place, the

roars of rage were furious and appalling. An old she bear and her two half-grown cubs had been investigating the body of the dead pig that, partly devoured, was lying at no great distance from the pathway and one of the cubs had got its foot in the trap and expressed surprise and terror by uttering a succession of sounds that caused the old bear to become frantic. The girls were really in a most dangerous position as the enraged beast was only a short distance away ; to increase the peril the foolish dog advanced a little way towards the wild beasts and commenced to bark furiously. The old bear seemed to connect the capture of her cub with the barking of the dog and made a terrific rush in that direction ; the dog at once retreated, closely pressed, and so brought the enraged bear face to face with the terrified girls. The huge black monster rushed forward and rose on its hind legs to seize a victim, but at that moment a sudden flash blazed in the darkness and a stunning report seemed to shake the forest. The bear appeared to rise from the ground and then fall backwards. In an instant a huge dog bounded past and sprang on the throat of the struggling beast, holding the head down in spite of the powerful paws of the bear, which were avoided by the dog with much dexterity. The girls now became aware that the man of the woods stood beside and in front of them ; he was without his hat, which had been knocked from his head by a lush. He

held in his hand a long, keen dagger-like knife that glittered in the moonlight, and he was evidently prepared for a hand to hand conflict with his shaggy antagonist ; but the bullet had passed through the heart and the wild beast was soon motionless. The hunter gave the body a push with his foot, then picked up his rifle from the ground, and advancing a step towards the girls, enquired if they were much frightened.

" Well," said Ermina, " we are not killed yet, but I do not know how soon the event may take place."

" Neither do I," said the hunter, " if you will insist upon going into places of danger without a protector. If I remember correctly, I warned you to look out for these bears?"

" Yes," replied the young lady, " and you may also remember that you declined to shoot these beasts, or beasts like them, lest you should interfere with the laws of nature, or some such nonsense ; but I should not rebuke you for truly you have saved our lives again. How did you know that these dreadful creatures were here?"

" I was looking for and expecting to meet a much more dangerous animal than a bear," replied the hunter ; " a beast that is somewhere in this vicinity, and if you will allow me I will see you to your home."

" The last time that you accompanied us you did not receive the reception that we would willingly have given you ;

I hope you do not for a moment think that my father, or any of us, expected that such a cowardly and treacherous attack was to be made?"

"I never supposed that Col. Adams was in any way connected with the affair," replied the hunter; "was any one injured in the scuffle?"

"No," said Miss Adams, "but the officers were in great danger both from your dog and the workmen, who, thinking that it was my father who was attacked, proceeded to punish the constables. Were you hurt yourself?"

"Not in the least," replied the hunter.

"I am glad," said the lady; "I was—I mean my father was—we were all very much alarmed lest you had been struck by some of the shots. What murderous villains they were to fire as they did, but the dog was so large and fierce that the men, taken by surprise, evidently thought that they were attacked by a wild beast. The sheriff has lost his office for his officiousness."

"What is the matter, Miss Mary," said the hunter; "are you ill?"

"I wish I was home," said the lady; "I do not think I can walk and feel as if I would faint."

"Take my arm," said the hunter; "my canoe is at the

lake shore close by and will carry us all ; a little water may revive you."

" Mercy !" said the lady ; " there are more bears, we will be torn to pieces."

" Do not be alarmed," replied the hunter ; " the dog has found out the beast in the trap, and has no doubt killed it ; you heard the noise of the struggle, all is quiet now. Shall we proceed ?"

Notwithstanding the presence of the well-armed and experienced hunter the young ladies were relieved on leaving the gloom of the woods and reaching the canoe, and were still more composed when the shore was left and the light canoe glided pleasantly on the moonlit and tranquil waters. The nervousness and alarm of the younger sister had, for a time, subdued the gay spirit of Ermina, who for some reason had not felt the least afraid, as soon as she had become aware of the presence of the hunter, and as Mary expressed herself as being much better now that the woods had been left, serenity was restored ; —the elder young lady, having remained silent for a time, addressed the hunter and enquired how he came to be so promptly on hand in a time of such danger.

" Like all other mysterious occurrences," replied the hunter ; " the wonder ceases when the matter is explained. I was on the lookout for a dangerous wild beast which I knew to be

not far off, and observing your tracks on a soft portion of the pathway, going, but not returning, I had sufficient gallantry to remain where I could render assistance if danger threatened."

"We would have started for home earlier," said Mary ; "but Jerry Moss, who intended to accompany us, was in search of his cows, at the beaver meadow, and did not return, so we started alone."

At this moment the girls became aware that the canoe was going much faster than had been the case before, although there had been no apparent increase of action on the part of the hunter, who had become silent, but at length enquired if Jerry Moss was the parent of the little girl that was playing with his dog when there was church service in the woods.

"Yes," replied Ermina ; "Lucy is a strange child and seems to possess a charm by the use of which she makes friends with birds and beasts, but she sometimes forms attachments to creatures that are not suitable as pets."

On reaching the landing place the hunter was cordially invited to enter the house and was informed that the Col. was absent, but that Mrs. Adams would be glad to meet and thank him for the service that he had rendered, "and," continued Ermina ; "if you still determine to be a Don Quixote of the woods, who devotes his time to shooting bears, giants and

things, or rescuing forlorn damsels from danger, we may have further need of your assistance, and would like to show our knowledge of the laws of chivalry by introducing you to our enchanted castle, as in duty bound."

The hunter had not time to reply before the large dog that had followed the shore and had been lying unobserved in the gloom, suddenly jumped forward to join his master, and Mary, who had been so startled before, that she was still in a nervous condition, uttered a scream and fainted, supposing that another wild beast was in the act of seizing her. As the house was close by assistance was soon obtained, but it was some days before the young lady recovered from the shock she had sustained by the adventures of the evening.

During the excitement, caused by the sudden illness of the girl, the hunter quietly took his departure, and sailing with great rapidity along the shore of the lake he was soon at the landing near the home of Jerry Moss. Mrs. Moss was outside in a state of great uneasiness, for her husband had not returned; as the hunter approached, she thought that Jerry had arrived and uttered a cry of gladness, but as she opened the gate she was astonished and dismayed to see a tall young man with a rifle in his hand and a great dog by his side. She knew at once that she beheld the wild man of the woods, and with a woman's shrewdness at once considered that she might

secure his assistance in discovering her husband, for whose safety she felt the greatest uneasiness. She told her story in a few words ; for although women are considered fond of talking, yet in a time of trouble or danger they will use fewer words than men often do.

The hunter enquired what direction Jerry had taken and when informed that he had intended going to the beaver meadow, at once proceeded to seek him, first telling Mrs. Moss that there was no great cause for alarm as her husband had very likely lost his way in the darkness, for although there was moonlight the leaves had fallen from the trees in the woods, causing the pathways made by the cattle to be difficult to keep. Warning Mrs. Moss not to leave the house on any account, the hunter took his way into the forest with all the lightness, skill and ease that vigorous youth and ample experience enabled him to practice. As he approached the beaver meadow he heard the cry of a panther, and any one who has ever listened to a tom cat in a dark night may understand what kind of a diabolical utterance an animal about a hundred times as large and a hundred times as savage could produce. Poor Mrs. Moss had still lingered at the gate outside and heard the yell with fear and trembling, at once concluding that if there were any devils on earth, there was certainly one in that forest.

The beast was evidently at no great distance from the hunter. Fortunately the low lands, near the meadow, were a little soft and wet. The cattle, when following the path, had trampled the fallen leaves into the ground and raised the loose earth with their feet, consequently the hunter was able to walk without making the least noise; as he advanced from the woods into the meadow his experienced eye was caught by some moving object that for a time disappeared. Soon afterwards he noticed a large, long bodied animal, walking cat-like along on the top log of the fence that surrounded the open beaver meadow. Standing perfectly motionless, while his dog crouched behind him, the hunter permitted the animal, which was unconscious of his presence, to approach until nearly opposite where he stood; placing his finger on the trigger, to prevent the click of the lock from being heard, he brought the rifle to full cock and slowly raised the gun to his shoulder; quiet and gentle as the motion was, it caught the quick ear of the wild beast, which suddenly crouched on the log after the fashion of a cat, but the keen and practiced eye of the hunter was fixed on the spot, and with a cool but quick aim he fired. The shot was not an ordinary spluttering flint lock explosion, but a solid, stunning crack of immense energy. The flash so blinded the hunter that for a few moments he could see nothing but the succession of angry growls of the most appalling de-

scription served to show that the beast was wounded. The well-trained dog remained beside his master but had risen to his feet and was trembling with eagerness and excitement. Startled by the report of the rifle, which showed that assistance was at hand, or a battle in progress, Jerry, who had armed himself with a pitchfork that he had discovered beside a hay rick, proceeded to utter a series of yells which might have frightened even a panther, and rushed out to take a hand in the fight that he believed was going on. The hunter paid no attention to these noisy demonstrations but reloaded his rifle with the utmost care and with much expedition, then preceded by his dog he advanced with his gun at full cock. He found the fierce beast sprawling about with his back broken, and although frantic with rage and pain, yet powerless to make an attack. A second shot quickly disposed of the creature. For a few moments the hunter admired his strange prize, almost regretting that necessity required the destruction of an animal possessed of such beauty, strength, activity and vitality. The St. Bernard was evidently disappointed at not having been called on to assist in the capture, and a little out of humor, he stretched himself amongst the long uncut grass near the dead panther, and as Jerry approached, the dog rose up with a growl, causing considerable alarm until the trembling man became aware that it was not the wild beast that confronted him.

The cattle were reluctant to leave the meadow, where the fire gave them confidence, but they were at length started homewards. On reaching the house, Jerry told his story and Mrs. Moss was enthusiastic in her commendations of the hunter's skill, courage and kindness, and was perfectly sure that the beast would have torn her husband to pieces before morning and then killed all the cattle. She rated Jerry severely for not taking his gun as she had advised. The hunter smiled good-humoredly as he glanced at the dusty old flint lock that hung on the wall and had the appearance of not having been used for many months. A bear skin and a blanket were accepted by the hunter and spread in an apartment on an immense pile of corn husks, where the remainder of the night was spent in sound sleep. About sunrise Mrs. Moss arose and prepared breakfast, composed of corn cake, maple sugar, eggs, good sweet butter and excellent cream. Jerry then placed the yoke on his oxen and hitching them to a stone boat he accompanied the hunter to the woods to bring in the wild beast which was first exposed to the admiration of Mrs. Moss and her little girl, and then taken to the mill that all might examine an animal such as had never been seen in that portion of the country before. Great was the commotion in the little village when Jerry told of his adventure and how he had been besieged until midnight in the beaver meadow, what unearthly yells the

monster gave, and how the cattle were attacked, and how he kept the beast off by setting fire to the hay. Nevertheless he was sure that he would have been killed had not the wild man come to his assistance, for the hay was nearly all burned up.

CHAPTER XII.

On a fine afternoon Col. Adams was in his garden attending to the bees which were then engaged in turning out the drones, an execution that always takes place when the honey season is over. The girls had been assisting their father in removing the surplus honey, Mrs. Adams was also in the garden gathering the seeds of certain flowers, and all having seated themselves in the warm and genial sunshine, the conversation turned on the strange character of the wild man and the possible cause of his solitary manner of living. Mrs. Adams enquired if it would be possible to find him. The Col. replied that if the girls would get once more into some position of extreme danger, the unknown would probably make his appearance.

"I fear," said Mrs. Adams ; "that we have scarcely done what was right with that strange person ; he has rendered us valuable service and has never yet been in the house nor received any return for his assistance."

"It is his own fault," said the Col.; "he would be welcome at any time."

"But," said Mrs. Adams; "you know that he was attacked, almost at our door, and attempts made on his life and liberty, besides he is so shy of society that under the circumstances we can scarcely wonder at his retirement."

"He knows well enough," said the Col.; "that we had nothing to do with the affronts offered him, but what are you driving at, good wife; do you wish me to go and look for the young man?"

Mrs. Adams replied: "I think you should try and discover his camp. In a short time furs will be perfect and then no doubt the exile, or whatever he is, will retire far into the forests of the unsettled interior and will be quite beyond your reach."

"Not if I tried to reach him," said the Col.; "but as I have promised to take the girls to some of the islands on the lake to gather wild grapes we might as well go when the weather is fine and the fruit is now fully ripe."

"Can you go to-morrow?" enquired Mrs. Adams.

"Yes," said Col. Adams; "we may as well go to-morrow; I remember that the first time I saw anything of this interesting wanderer it was at this season of the year, and on one

of the larger islands, but there are so many islands that many hunters could keep out of sight unless they were willing to discover themselves."

Early the next morning the large bark canoe was launched, Jerry Moss was in the stern and the two girls occupied places in the centre, while Col. Adams took the bow, having his gun at hand.

The great forests which encircled the lake or covered the islands with matured verdure now showed all the colors of red, brown and gold ; immense flocks of ducks, of every variety, splashed, fluttered and flew about the sheltered bays and the romantic groves that seemed to grow out of the water, and which, in places, appeared red with high bush cranberries, while the trees along the shore were sometimes festooned with ripe clusters of grapes.

The Col. had succeeded in bringing down, with his gun, a number of wild ducks as the flocks passed rapidly through the air, or rose suddenly with great clamour from amongst the extensive beds of wild rice that in some places fringed the shores. Knowing the attachment that even a nomad forms for particular places which he has before visited, or that for a time may have been his residence, and are connected with associations which resemble a love of home, Col. Adams sought the island where he had first noticed the old camp of the hunter, and as

the canoe swept round the heavy brown foliage of the maples and the dark green verdure of the spruce and balsam trees, with which the ground was covered, the tent of the hunter could be discerned. Not seeing any one the Col. called aloud and was astonished to be answered by the hunter himself, who stood close by, but was almost invisible, more on account of the color of his clothes and the stillness with which he stood, than from any concealment afforded by the bushes near him.

For a moment Colonel Adams and his daughters felt as if they were intruding, but the hunter stepped forward and cordially invited them to land. Although ordinarily inexperienced in showing attention to young ladies, he knew well the proper manner of getting in and out of a canoe, and under his management all were soon safely on shore, for although docile and obedient in the hands of an experienced person, the buoyant and erratic bark is in some cases as wild as the Indian that made it.

The camp was sufficiently sheltered by the dense walls formed by the evergreen foliage of the spruce trees that grew around, the lower branches almost resting on the ground, forming an agreeable gloom, and sending forth a pleasing balsamic odor that perfumed the air. The roomy white tent contained two or three small leather trunks, a few books were also visible, the finely dressed skin of a very large bear was spread over

some soft, feathery spruce branches, the skin forming a carpet by day and serving for a bed at night. With the exception of several splendidly finished guns, of different descriptions, the tent contained little else. In the darker gloom of the spruce grove, another but smaller tent stood, in this there was a bag of flour, some biscuit and a supply of fresh venison. Near the larger tent, in the open air, a fire of dry iron-wood had been kindled and had burned down into a mass of red hot coals, giving much heat with very little smoke. At a little distance the birch bark canoe rested, bottom side up. The St. Bernard dog appeared to express surprise at the presence of visitors, but understood that it was his duty to be friendly. While Jerry Moss was enjoying himself fishing, and the Colonel was engaged in examining the curiosities of the island; with some difficulty the hunter attempted to entertain the young ladies, for whom he provided a seat by spreading the bear skin over the portion of a large log that rested in front of the fire.

"So this is where you have a perpetual picnic," said Ermina, "no wonder that you are strange in your disposition, here all day alone, and then to spend the night in solitude, you are more secluded than Elijah when he was fed by ravens.

"Have you heard anything about Raven," said the hunter, "what is the latest about that distinguished officer?"

"It was not him that I was speaking about," said the lady. "And your poor dog too ; I wonder that he does not go mad and bite you ; then when the snow falls and the ice forms on the lakes, to be all alone in woods with the wolves and the owls during the long nights, it is dreadful."

"In the natural and untamed world," said the hunter, "there is very little suffering visible when compared with what exists when settlement and civilization has made a change ; man oppresses and enslaves every living thing which comes under his control. The wild creatures of the woods and plains, rivers and lakes, lose their ability to protect themselves or find their own food ; they become helpless and stupid. Look at that flock of geese passing along the surface of the lake, they are wild, strong, self-reliant and free. Compare them with the inactive, waddling idiots of the same race that inhabit the barnyard. See also the difference between the fleet and agile sheep of the mountain, when in a wild state, and a similar animal when tamed and degraded into a dependent and inactive mass of innocence and wool. The same rule holds good in the case of men. In a perfectly civilized condition, the mind is supposed to be improved by receiving an agreeable polish, but in securing this, other qualities are lost and the untiring, independent and undaunted native of this earth degenerates into a being most effeminate. A kind of a good for nothing dandy,

who dresses in clothes supposed to be ornamental, but which wholly unfits him to engage in any manly employment. Such a man is usually prepared by practice and education to take advantage of the necessities and simplicity of others who may be more honorable and industrious than he is, consequently the polished man becomes so selfish and conceited that he cares not who suffers if he escapes pain and is permitted to retain his supposed superiority."

"If you are not through speaking, you can go on," said Ermina," "for we are beginning to believe in the doctrine of savage independence and an Adam and Eve style of living. Although a little wild in your remarks some of your statements are true."

"Yes," said the hunter, "society does exhibit the strange spectacle of continued strife between the grasping and those who are simple or unsuspecting, and in the struggle to gain an advantage, every species of deceit is brought to bear, falsehood, treachery, selfishness, cruelty and dishonesty appear on one hand, while on the other may be seen cold, hunger, nakedness, humiliation and misery, even the animals that are so unfortunate as to have bad men for their masters are made to suffer in order to support avarice. The noble horse that loves his master and would obey his commands and continue his speed as long as life lasted, is sold without compassion to a cruel

stranger, the hard working ox that assisted to clear the ground, harrow the fields and bring home the grain, is knocked on the head that there may be beef with the bread that the murdered animal has helped to earn or provide.

"I suppose," said Ermina. "that you only think of these things when the moon is full, you would perhaps act wisely to sleep more than you do."

The hunter laughed and said that something to eat would be more in order than sleeping. "My domestic arrangements," he continued, "are neither very convenient nor very complete, and you will require to imagine that you really are at a picnic of the most primitive description."

So saying, the hunter proceeded to take from the fire a vessel that, when opened provided some excellent dry potatoes ; what seemed to be merely a pile of ashes was turned over and an old fashioned bake kettle, with a closely fitting lid was disinterred and a delicious roast of venison was extracted from the interior ; a boiled salmon trout, of magnificent proportions, and of delighfful flavor was placed on a large piece of birch bark and served in rich portions with potatoes. Clean plates for the venison were quickly produced, bread, wild honey, with a few heavy clusters of purple grapes taken from vines in the vicinity completed a repast that all enjoyed.

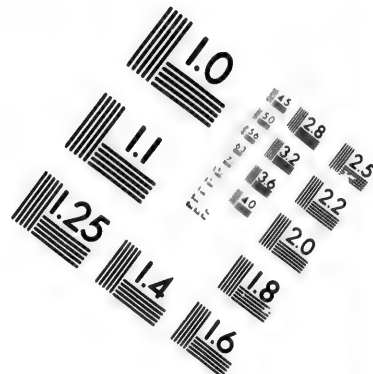
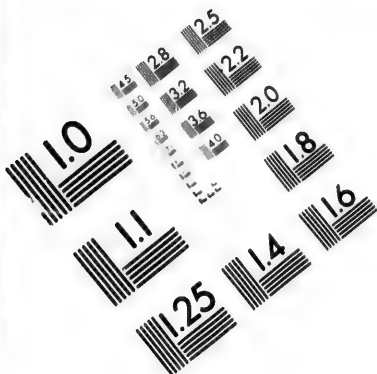
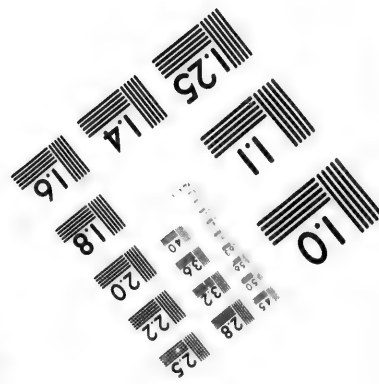
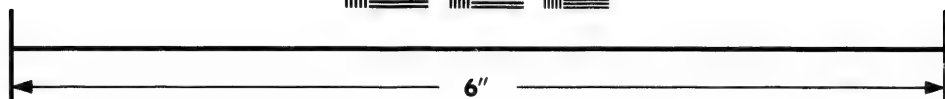
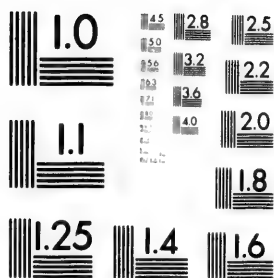


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When dinner was over Col. Adams frankly told the hunter that besides affording the girls an opportunity to gather grapes he had come out on the lake with intentions to invite to his home one who had been of such service to his family in order that Mrs. Adams might express her appreciation of his courage and activity.

The hunter remained silent for a few moments and then said, "I do not see that the little attention that I have had an opportunity of showing the young ladies when they were in trouble entitles me to so much consideration. Accustomed only to the woods and unpracticed in the customs of civilized life, I will prove, in all probability, an uninteresting visitor. I will, however, be delighted to pay my respects before I remove my camp from this place."

"What need have you to wander from one place to another," enquired Miss Mary, "I am sure, as far as my experience goes, there are wild beasts enough every where, at least I always meet more than I can welcome."

"It is the way of all savages," replied the hunter, "like the Arab, the Gipsy or the Indian, the hunter must ever be moving."

"I suppose," said Ermina, "that it would be against natural law or laws of some kind to take all the game from one

place, and it is only proper to give all the birds and beasts of the rivers and forests an equal chance for their lives."

"I suppose," said Col. Adams, "that you are well acquainted with the country far and near; do you know of any rivers flowing into this lake on which there are good groves of pine, high falls, or do you know of good tracts of land beyond the present settlement, in the unsurveyed country? I have not yet found time to make the explorations that I intended to proceed with."

"What streams have you examined?" was the question of the hunter.

"Only the river that feeds this lake, but I have been informed that there is a fine belt of land on another river which also enters the lake, I am also told that the river descends over a perpendicular ledge of rock some distance above the mouth."

"I have visited the falls you speak of," said the hunter, "and the information which you have received regarding the excellency of the land and the beauty of the country is quite correct; far up the river there are valuable forests of pine, near the lake the trees are mostly hard wood."

"You describe a good district and one that will be quickly settled," remarked the Col. "I suppose no survey has yet been made?"

"No," replied the hunter, "a grant of a few hundred acres, with the falls as a centre has been given, and a timber limit far up the stream has also been bought."

"Who is the purchaser," said the Col.

"A very wild and imprudent young man," replied the hunter, "one whom I fear will make but a poor use of the property, for the animals that inhabit the region are in greater danger of being destroyed than the pine trees."

"Do you know of any good cranberry marshes in the extensive territory where you are lord of the fowl and the brute," said Ermina, with a smile; "you will please observe that I wish to change the subject, for when father begins to talk about waterfalls and pine trees he approaches a source of endless conversation?"

"Yes, Miss Adams," was the reply, "there are beautiful cranberry fields in some of the old beaver meadows of this extensive forest. In some places the grass in the openings looks as if there had been a shower of rubies. How wise and provident nature shows herself even in the most retired solitudes, for we find growing wild in the greatest profusion, the most beautiful, delicious and lasting of all fruits; neither rain, ice, frost or snow will injure these wonderful berries, or destroy their delicate flavor; at any time the traveller, or the trapper, even in mid winter, can, by shaking the snow from the teem-

ing vines, procure a supply of cranberries to serve as a relish to his venison ; when the snow melts in the spring and the water rises over the marshes, the submerged fruit fields present a singular and beautiful appearance, when sailed over by a canoe, for immense numbers of berries are at the bottom, sparkling like gems beneath the clear water, and when the vines are shaken by the paddle the berries, unimpaired by their long burial in the snow, rise to the surface like an inverted shower of fruit and float in beauty around the canoe."

" Could you show us some of those beautiful and enchanting places ?" enquired Miss Adams.

" Certainly," replied the hunter, " but even an adventurous young lady like yourself would find an ordinary cranberry marsh a spot too difficult to approach and the berries too heavy to carry over the rough ground that you might have to pass through."

" In that case, I suppose, we must submit to disappointment ?" said the young lady.

" Not at all," replied the hunter, " during this week I have spent several days at a cranberry marsh of magnificent proportions, rich with fruit of a fine quality and have brought you a supply of berries which I hope you will receive as a present, for they were gathered purposely for your use ; I much regret that the place is so difficult to reach that I cannot intro-

duce you to this Eden in the wilderness, for the wealth of fruit is scarcely yet touched."

"We will be delighted with your gift," said the young lady, "but much regret that we can have no opportunity of supplying ourselves by visiting the place which you describe, for a considerable portion of the enjoyment obtained from the possession of wild fruit is had in gathering the riches which have cost no labor, no care and no anxiety in the production."

The hunter looked earnestly at the lady for a moment and then said: "You are quite right if you are serious, and if you have discovered my peculiar weakness, you are nevertheless correct even if you are enjoying a joke at my expense. The inhabitants of this world are all struggling to obtain as much as possible free from the great storehouse of nature and enjoy the labour of gathering, much more than the labour of producing; even the boy collecting nuts or catching fish is much happier than when weeding a garden or planting potatoes; the miner, the lumberman, and the hunter as well as the berry-picker, enjoy the satisfaction, the novelty and surprise of finding unclaimed and unearned riches in the woods or waters."

"This may be the case with men and boys," said Miss Mary; "but with women and girls the rule may not apply."

"Certainly it will," replied the hunter; "women are in-

veterate berry-pickers and have been ever since Eve appropriated the apple in paradise."

"That is too bad," said Mary laughing; "were it not that we are under obligations for berries, we would not forgive you."

Col. Adams, who had crossed the channel to the mainland and had been examining the woods, while Jerry was spending the time fishing, now returned and said that it was time to embark. The hunter expressed his intentions of accompanying the party down the lake, offering to steer the canoe, in order that the Col. might have a chance to use his gun. Jerry Moss took the hunter's canoe, while the wild man, with his own good paddle in one hand and his rifle in the other, stepped into the large bark and took the place that had formerly been occupied by Jerry. With much skill and without noise the hunter guided the canoe; he seeming to know, as if by instinct, where the flocks of ducks could be found, experience had made him acquainted with the position of the wild rice beds that were the favorite resorts of the magnificent black duck, and the canoe was directed through narrow openings amongst the tall rice stalks and round short turns, coming within easy range of the birds which were then in the finest condition. As the Col. was a keen sportsman and an excellent shot, splendid sport was obtained. Only once did the hunter fire. A fine flock of

wild geese was passing on the wing, but too far off to be reached with shot, and on the Col. expressing a wish that a gray goose could be captured, the hunter slightly turned the canoe, and raising his rifle he remained steady for a moment and fired ; the heavy and splendid bird stooped in its flight and fell with a splash into the lake. The Col. expressed surprise, as shooting a bird when in the air with a rifle that carries but a single bullet is a most difficult thing to do.

As the canoe approached the landing place, Mrs. Adams advanced down the pathway and was introduced to the wild man, whom she now met for the first time. With some reluctance the hunter was induced to enter the house and was invited to remain to tea ; he did not, however, seem at home, and showed more uneasiness than he had hitherto exhibited, and when Mrs. Adams thanked him for the assistance that he had afforded the girls in the time of danger, he blushed in embarrassment and soon departed, walking away through the star-lit darkness with the noiseless step that distinguished him.

"I do not think he is so very mad after all," said Miss Mary ; "do you think he could be caught and tamed ?" and she looked sharply at her sister, who did not seem to hear.

CHAPTER XIII.

The season was now advanced, the leaves had fallen, but the hazy Indian summer days continued warm and fine, many birds had gone south or were lingering on the way, enjoying the mellow sunshine ; ducks and wild geese were gathering in large flocks preparing to depart ; the white winged water fowl had come in from the north, and the grass built houses of the muskrats were showing high above the withered stalks of the reeds and rice ; the mink and the otter were fast donning their winter robes of glossy fur ; the deer had changed their color from red to dark grey, and were in their finest and heaviest condition ; still the hunter lingered amongst the islands of the lake, perhaps not wishing to depart for the distant hunting grounds where he had determined to spend the winter until the weather would change, or perhaps unconsciously attracted by the agreeable presence of the young ladies whose acquaintance he had made during the summer.

Jerry Moss had spent a few days at home on his farm, covering with earth the pits that held his potatoes, and making such repairs in his outbuildings as were required for the comfort of his cattle during the approaching winter. The day had been remarkably fine and in the afternoon Jerry took his little girl by the hand and proceeded to the shore of the creek that

flowed through the beaver meadow, to gather butternuts. They were quite successful in their search, and when Jerry had filled his large basket and Lucy had filled her small one, Jerry concluded to follow the creek for a mile or so, and shoot partridges, he having his gun with him. Conducting Lucy almost to the clearing and within sight of the fence, he told her to run to the house, which was quite near, and that he would bring her a partridge for herself when he returned. Attracted by the brilliant red berries of a wild rowan tree, that could be distinctly seen at a little distance in the leafless woods, Lucy left the pathway and took the wrong direction on her return. The valley, into which she had descended, prevented her from seeing the clearing, and the fence that surrounded it, although both were close by. The footpath was almost invisible owing to the covering of red and yellow leaves that obscured the track beneath the trees and produced a sameness everywhere. Poor Lucy was lost and her wanderings only took her further astray. On Jerry's return, Mrs. Moss, who had been looking from the window through the dim light of the fading day, enquired, in a startled manner, where Lucy was. Jerry looked astonished and shocked and exclaimed that he had left her at the fence two hours before. To the distracted parents it was evident that the little girl was either lost in the woods or had been carried off by some wild animal. Returning quickly, accom-

panied by the nearly frantic mother, Jerry found the little basket containing butternuts, but saw no trace of the lost child, nor any sign of a struggle, and his only hope was that she had wandered from the pathway and was now astray in the woods, from which she might be rescued ; he called aloud, and fired his gun frequently, but in vain. Jerry continued the search in the darkness, while Mrs. Moss in an agony of excitement, went to the mill for assistance. Unfortunately Colonel Adams was away, but the old minister, who first preached in the settlement, had returned to again hold service, and he at once collected all the mill hands and as many others as possible, and before midnight search parties were out in all directions. The news spread quickly that a child was wandering in the woods, and as it was the Sabbath, all the men in the district assembled to look for the lost, while with that sympathy common to the sex, the women who could leave their own children, gathered to do what was in their power to comfort Mrs. Moss or provide refreshments for the tired and unsuccessful wanderers who returned discouraged from the woods, hoping that others might have been more fortunate than themselves. During the whole of Sunday the search was continued ; a number of the men, provided with cedar bark torches, ranged the forest all Sunday night, while others, exhausted by exertion, sought to obtain a little rest that they might be ready for the next day's

labour. Monday passed without any trace of the lost child having been discovered, and hope was about gone, even with the most sanguine. The mildness of the weather was encouraging, and as there was abundance of beechnuts in the forest, some nourishment could be obtained, but besides other dangers in the woods, two nights' exposure at that season of the year without proper food, seemed to be more than so young a child would be likely to bear. The old clergyman, who had walked as long as he was able, could only assemble with the grief stricken mother and the sorrowful women who were with her, and pray that divine assistance be given to those who still ranged the forest, and that they might be directed in their course that the little wanderer should be recovered.

The hunter had spent the Sabbath day in his camp far up the lake ; he had been unhappy, the woods and waters did not now afford him the satisfaction and enjoyment that they had once given. His attachment for Miss Adams had caused him to discover that he was lacking in many of the accomplishments that can only be acquired by intercourse with others and more fully developed in female society. For the first time he felt lonely in his solitude, and yet too proud to yield or be subdued by a feeling that had already mastered him, although he would not admit the fact. Solitude nourishes love, as in retirement there is little to withdraw the imagination from the object of affection.

The lover had thought of Miss Adams all day and dreamed of her at night. Tired of the inactivity of the past day and disturbed and excited by his emotions he rose early on Monday morning and started for a long walk in the woods, with his rifle in his hand and his great dog by his side, he proceeded on his way, leaving his canoe on the shore, near where he had landed to assist Col. Adams and his daughters to gather plums some weeks before. With vigorous steps he followed the valley of the beautiful forest stream in search of tracks of wild animals, such as otter or beaver. A deep covering of fallen leaves was on the ground and amongst them many squirrels were rustling in search of beechnuts, chipmunks were adding their cheerful chatter to other voices of the forest, partridges in numbers were amongst the winter berry bushes, and blue-jays were screaming over head on the trees. The hunter had travelled far, and about noon he approached the creek and kindled a fire on the shore, more for the sake of the cheerfulness of the blaze than from need of warmth. Taking from the leather game bag which he carried a small fishing line with a hook attached, he cut a slender rod in the nearest thicket and advanced to where the creek rushed passed some fallen timber into a deep pool, he proceeded to catch a few trout for his dinner. While engaged in this interesting occupation his attention was attracted by a strange action of his dog which had

crossed the creek and had evidently struck a trail different from that usually found in the forest, and was acting in an extraordinary manner. The hunter laid down the rod and line, which he was successfully using and crossed the creek on the nearest log ; he was surprised beyond measure to notice on the soft ground, by the water's edge, the tracks of a child. She had evidently been taking a drink from the stream and had lain down to do so, as could be seen from the print of the little fingers on the soft earth, and had afterwards crossed on the log which the hunter had used as a bridge. With that instinct and sagacity for which the St. Bernard is distinguished, when the lives of human beings are in danger, the dog had discovered the foot prints and seemed to feel an uncontrollable desire to follow and discover the wanderer. The hunter quickly concluded that a child was lost and was wandering somewhere in the woods ; as the tracks seemed to have been made that morning and the scent sufficiently strong to attract attention, he had good hopes that he might be able to overtake and recover the lost. Calling the dog he sought to make the animal comprehend what was wanted, and finding that he was anxious to follow the track, the hunter at once left fire, dinner and trout and kept the dog in sight, running at an almost equal speed ; the chief fear of the hunter was that, should the child be alive, she would die with terror at seeing a great beast approaching

at full speed. After a run for a considerable distance, with many stops and windings, something white was noticed at the foot of a steep hill, round the base of which the creek flowed. On the dry leaves a little sheltered by a fallen tree sat the poor child, she had evidently been too weak to climb the elevation, and the tired little thing had sat or lain down unable to proceed. The hunter at once saw that the child was little Lucy, although much changed by the hardship and exposure that she had endured. For a time she looked in a dazed kind of a way as if she feared that she was dreaming or did not see rightly, but when she was spoken to she burst out with the words, "I'm lost, I'm lost; take me, take me;" and as the dog approached she held on to the neck of the shaggy animal with affection and distraction. In the meantime the hunter quickly unrolled his blanket, and pulling off the little girl's shoes, he wrapped her cold and lacerated limbs in the warm wollen, and opening the leather case which he carried, he produced a piece of cold venison steak and gave her a morsel at a time; perhaps no food could have been more suitable, tender, juicy and nutritious, exhausted nature was soon in some degree restored. Slung his rifle over his shoulder he took the rescued child in his arms and started on his way back, sometimes stopping to rest and offer a little more food and a drink, for as their course was frequently along the creek there was plenty of water.

It was late at night when the hunter emerged from the forest and stood on the shore of the lake ; he was much fatigued, as the way had been long and rough and the night dark in the shade of the trees as there were many evergreens along the stream. The child was sleeping and he placed her gently in the canoe. The St. Bernard lay down beside her and in a short time the camp was reached. As she was lifted from the canoe the little girl awoke, and in a low voice inquired if they were out of the woods.

The hunter replied that they were.

" I am so glad," she replied ; " the woods are very big ; you will not leave me ?" she said.

" Only for a moment, until I kindle a fire and make you some food."

" I am very hungry," she replied, " where is the dog ? let him stay with me, for I am afraid. I am not crazy and still in the woods, am I ?"

" No, my poor child," said the hunter, " you are quite safe, and when it is daylight I will take you to your mother."

The hunter quickly prepared some broth, using a handful of rice, and a portion of a partridge ; he also took some refreshment himself, having tasted nothing since the morning ; he then went to rest warmly wrapped up in his blanket, with

the child's hands on his neck, for the poor thing still seemed to fear that she might awake and find that she was alone in the great forest. Both the tired wanderers were soon fast asleep, for although most anxious to relieve the anxiety and distress of the parents, the hunter feared that further exposure and exertion in the open air would be too much for the little one in her present exhausted condition and determined to proceed no further.

A little before daylight the hunter arose, fully refreshed, and placing the still sleeping child in the canoe, warmly wrapped in a blanket, he proceeded rapidly over the misty water of the sleeping lake.

CHAPTER XIV.

The house of Jerry Moss stood but a short distance from the lake and the clearing reached to the water's edge. It was still early in the morning, but there was a stir at the house for Col. Adams and several of his best men were on the point of starting on a further search for the lost child in a new direction. A portion of the night had been spent at the home of Jerry, other parties having camped at different places in the forest.

Jerry's house consisted of two apartments, the largest and best room contained a table, a stove, a few chairs, a case con-

taining a few books, and a lounge or small sofa. In this the most commodious portion of the building, Mrs. Adams and her daughter Ermina, had served a hasty but well-prepared breakfast to the men who were about to continue their exploration of the woods. The venerable old clergyman was spending a few moments in worship, before the party would start out.

In the meantime the canoe of the hunter was rapidly approaching and had almost reached its destination, although it was still morning twilight and the sun had not yet risen. When the hunter landed he took the sleeping child in his arms and approached the house unobserved, as all were engaged in their devotions. He heard singing, and as he advanced nearer he heard the voice of prayer in tones of intense earnestness. The old man said : " Our Father in heaven, who has promised to be with us in six troubles and not leave us in the seventh, and who has said that our prayers will be answered even before we speak, look on these distressed parents, and if it be thy good pleasure restore their child."

The hunter had advanced with his noiseless step and in his invisible manner, and as all heads were bowed as the worshippers kneeled he was neither noticed nor heard, as his soft moccasins made no sound on the floor ; he was at a loss what to do, but in a moment he advanced and placed the sleeping child on the lounge against which the mother was kneeling,

her eyes covered by her hands and the tears streaming from between her fingers. The hunter would have retired unnoticed but as soon as he withdrew his arms, the child awoke, and called out loudly, "he is going away ; he is going away." So startled, astonished and amazed were the members of the little assembly that some of the women fainted. The mother screamed and grasped the child as if she feared that the vision would vanish. The old minister said, "the presence of the Lord is amongst us ; He has heard our prayers," and he reverently covered his face in silent adoration.

For a time all was excitement and confusion. The child had broken away from her mother and taking the hunter by the hand she had raised herself into his arms and clung to her preserver with all the energy of affection caused by fear of his departure.

When the commotion had subsided and when thankfulness and expressions of gratitude were lavishly bestowed on the hunter, he expressed his extreme satisfaction at the restoration of little Lucy, and said that to the sagacity and instinct of his St. Bernard dog, and to his providential presence in the right place at the proper time might be attributed the rescue and recovery of the little girl.

"Oh," said the child ; "he carried me all night in his arms through the dark woods, and I was lost and could not

walk any more, and lay down to die ; he will go away into the black woods where it is dreadful, and I will not see him again. Will you hold him, Mina, until I go to my mother ?”

That a child so young should have noticed Ermina’s influence on the wild man caused a blush to mantle on the young lady’s cheek, but she went forward gracefully and taking the hunter’s arm, said that she would retain him, and told the little girl to go and kiss her mother and then return and kiss her.

“ No,” said the child ; “ the wild man will kiss you, Mina.”

“ Certainly,” replied the hunter, and he immediately gave the unresisting beauty a graceful salute.

“ Let us all kiss him,” said Mrs. Moss, whose feelings of gratitude were so strongly excited that she could think of no other way of giving expression.

“ Dear sisters and brothers,” said the minister ; “ while it is proper that we should show our appreciation of the precious service that this interesting stranger has rendered, we would be lacking in our duty to the Great Giver of all good if we failed to express our thankfulness to Him who, in His good providence, has in such a wonderful manner restored this dear child. Let us pray.”

CHAPTER XV.

The different search parties came in from the woods during the forenoon ; all showed the utmost curiosity to see the little girl whose adventures had caused such excitement and anxiety; even greater interest was taken in the presence and appearance of the strange and mysterious young man who had been her deliverer and who, although often heard of in the frontier, had very seldom been seen. The dog, too, was an object of observation as he reposed beside the canoe, which contained nothing but the well formed paddle, the highly finished rifle and the fine blanket in which the child had been wrapped.

At an early hour dinner was ready and the little band of pioneers took their places at the table all in the greatest good humor, the minister asked a blessing and when the repast was ended, he gave a short address, and on behalf of Jerry and his wife, Col. Adams thanked the men who had so much exerted themselves in the search for the lost child, and all departed to their homes in a happy frame of mind. When Col. Adams and his wife and daughter were ready to return it was found that the carriage would only accommodate two persons with comfort, so Miss Adams took a place in the hunter's canoe and on their arrival at the landing place he accepted an invitation to spend the evening and give particulars concerning the recovery of the

little girl. During the conversation the Col. expressed a desire to learn where the strange and sagacious St. Bernard dog had been obtained, and the hunter told the following story :

“ It is often the case that strange characters drift into new countries, and men whose education, experience and ability would seem to fit them for other situations are frequently discovered in very unlikely places.

Some years ago a strange man lived a sort of nomadic life in the somewhat wild and rough country that formed the shores of one of the tributaries of the Ottawa river. He was exceedingly solitary in his habits, seldom speaking to any one and scarcely noticing those whom he met. His chief employment was that of making pine shingles, for which there was a limited demand amongst the settlers who occupied farms, at intervals, amongst the pines wherever there was a belt of hard wood timber that served to produce ashes for the manufacture of potash, which was almost the only article of commerce exported from the wild country.

The shingle maker was a terror to all the untaught children in the settlement, although quite peacefully disposed, his silence and strange appearance filled them with dread and causeless alarm.

In those days every ordinary man shaved off his beard, but the shingle maker wore a long, heavy and wavy mass of

hair that hung down on his breast, and his tall form had an air of dignity that was remarkable, while his fierce black eyes burned with a peculiar fire. There was a scar on his forehead and another across the back of his hand, that showed he must, at some time, have been engaged in war or some other dangerous strife. His life was most retired, he seemed to love the woods, where he could listen to the song of the birds, the hum of the passing bees, and the sound of the wind amongst the leaves, but he was never observed to smile. He did not work on the Sabbath day, but spent the hours picking berries, looking at the wild flowers, listening to the birds, or in watching the fishes in the clear water of the river, that flowed near the old deserted house which he had taken possession of and which formed his home. His food consisted chiefly of bread and milk, with a few potatoes from the garden which he cultivated, and often a fish from the river. He had a cow that during the day kept constantly near him, and often accompanied him to the woods, where he made his shingles or followed him in his quiet walks, feeding as she went. In winter the shingle maker had his blocks of wood drawn to the rude house which he occupied and he split and shaved his shingles within doors.

At that time I was much given to wander in the woods, as I am still, and often met the strange man when selecting his trees, or saw him busy at work beside some great pine that he

had cut down and had sawn into proper lengths. On several occasions I had assisted him to cut his trees into blocks, and at such times he seemed constantly lost in thought and almost oblivious to all that was passing. He would, however, look at every bird and listen to every song. He was particularly interested with the apparent happiness of the squirrels, the drumming of the partridges pleased him, and he seemed to contrast the happiness of the creatures around him with his own disappointments, loneliness and misfortunes.

Several years had passed, and on a fine afternoon in autumn, when the red leaves were on the trees, I had as usual been wandering in the forest, or amongst the groves of young trees that had encroached on the deserted clearings of departed and discontented settlers. Near the place there was an old road, seldom traversed, as the country was but little settled owing to the rocky nature of the soil. The usual description of conveyance to be met with in that district was an ox cart, and even these primitive vehicles were exceedingly rare, but on emerging from the denser woods I was astonished to see what I supposed to be one of the most magnificent carriages in the world drawn by a fine and powerful pair of horses. Two men were on the front and two ladies occupied the back seat. The party was evidently at a loss where to go, and one of the men called to me as soon as I was observed. The man asked some

questions that I could not understand, although the words were spoken in what was supposed to be the English language. One of the ladies then threw back her veil, and completely astonished me by her distinguished air and appearance. Partly by signs and partly by words she intimated that she wished to know where a man could be found who made pieces of wood, to keep out something, that she sought to explain by making use of an umbrella. At length it began to dawn on my mind that it was the shingle maker that the lady was enquiring for. Going before the horses for a mile or two along an old pathway overgrown by raspberry and other bushes, I, with difficulty, led the way. Several times the horses were stopped and the driver looked with dismay at the surrounding wilderness into which he had penetrated. One of the ladies seemed to be in the utmost terror and distress, while the other in an unknown language, seemed attempting to encourage her. Knowing that the shingle maker should be engaged at his usual employment working at a pine tree at no great distance from where we were, I raised my hand as a signal to the driver, who at once stopped the horses. I then called loudly, and was answered immediately by the shingle maker. The moment the lady heard the sound of his voice her excitement passed all bounds. She gave a loud scream and sprang from the carriage like a wild thing rushing towards the place from whence came the voice, regardless of every obstacle.

The shingle-maker, having heard the unusual noise of an approaching carriage, had been advancing through the bushes unobserved, and was the most astonished man in the world, as well as the most happy, for the lady was his wife whom he had never expected to see again.

On account of something that had been considered a political crime, a Russian nobleman had been compelled to leave his country in order to save his life. His estates had been confiscated and he considered an outlaw. By the death of the Emperor and the changes that followed the property had been restored and a pardon procured. His high-born and faithful wife had traced him to Canada, and at length discovered him at the rude employment of making shingles in the wildest part of a very wild country. The bushes concealed the tenderness of the strange meeting, as bushes have often done in somewhat similar circumstances. In the brief moment that had passed a remarkable change had taken place in the appearance of both. The man had become more erect, less dejected and subdued, he now walked like the son of a king, or an officer of high rank, as he really was, or had been. The lady had recovered from her nervousness and anxiety and looked young, radiant and happy. She, however, seemed half afraid that she was in a dream or that she was not enjoying a reality ; sometimes she laughed at the rough appearance and coarse gar-

ments of her long lost husband, then suddenly remembering the misery and danger to which he had been exposed, she would burst into tears and cling to him with an intensity of feeling.

The female who attended the lady seemed to be a maid, or companion, and one of the men looked like an officer in the army and was probably a near relative of either the wife or the husband. In some way I discovered that the lady and her companion supposed that it might take years to find the lost husband and friend, so in passing through Europe a young St. Bernard had been procured from the monks who keep that celebrated breed of dogs which have a natural instinct for searching out lost persons and saving human life.

In the excitement caused by her happiness the lady offered me a purse that seemed to contain gold coin, of course I refused to take such a gift, she then removed a ring from her own beautiful hand and presented me with the jewel, smiling sweetly as she did so. In advancing along the rough bush road the young dog, which was secured by a long, light chain to the back of the carriage, had broken loose and seemed to have been forgotten and was content to remain with me."

"What became of the cow that you spoke of?" enquired one of the young ladies.

The hunter replied that "on visiting the old home of the shingle maker, a day or two after his departure, the cow was there and was evidently pleased to see a human being. A poor settler was glad to obtain the animal and the few things that remained in the house. Those rare and beautiful tulips that you admire so much, Miss Adams, are from plants found in the garden of the shingle maker, and were evidently sent or brought from Europe."

"What caused such a man as you describe to engage in so humble an occupation as that of making shingles?" enquired Miss Mary.

The hunter replied "the unfitness of the man for any ordinary position and a determination to die rather than submit to servitude ; his lack of knowledge of the English language, and a love of retirement that seems natural to the unfortunate or oppressed, may have determined him in the course which he took."

The story having ended most of those present retired ; Miss Adams was about to follow when she was gently detained by the lover, who told her that if she would remain he would show her the ring that he had obtained from the mysterious lady. Taking a small leather case from his pocket he produced a little silver box, from which he took a heavy gold ring, in which was set a beautiful diamond of great value ; placing

the diamond and gold on the young lady's finger, he said that if she would consider the jewel an engagement ring she would make him very happy. At this interesting moment Mary opened the door and rebuked her sister and the lover for not coming to tea and for keeping the others waiting.

The flashing diamond quickly attracted the attention of those who surrounded the table, and owing to the strange history and great beauty of the ring it was an object of much interest. The lover observed with satisfaction that although the young lady was willing to let the jewel be examined while on her beautiful hand, she declined to permit the ring to be taken from her finger, consequently the lover came quickly to the conclusion that he was not in danger of suffering from a refusal.

"You have been proposing to Ermina," said the gay sister; "and have given her the ring that you told us that strange story about. Perhaps you are some disappointed and jilted lover who has taken to the woods in despair and carried the rejected ring with you."

"In case you should be correct in your suspicions," replied the hunter; "I must bribe you to silence." So saying he produced another beautiful jewel which he handed to Mary as a present.

CHAPTER XVI.

Before his departure the hunter placed a small package of papers in the hands of Col. Adams, not considering the woods a safe place for the documents which were of value. It was now discovered that the name of the man of whom so little was known was Forester, and that he was the owner of a considerable tract of land in a new district near the upper end of the lake to which settlement was rapidly advancing.

Having had a short interview with Miss Adams and having said adieu to others, Forester stepped lightly into his canoe and passed swiftly but silently over the still waters of the lake, and on reaching his camp was surprised to find his old acquaintance, Andy, in possession and seemingly quite at home. A good fire was burning brightly in front of the tent and an excellent supper of wild duck and venison was ready.

"So you are going to the woods," said Andy, "like as if there was anything else than woods in this country, and I have been thinking of going with you. I could chop your fire wood, skin your beasts, look after your furs and bring back to Miss Adams a lock of your hair if the wolves should devour you."

"Miss Adams would perhaps not care for such a gift," replied Forester, "and I do not permit wolves to devour me, but

come along, you will perhaps wish to be back before the spring comes."

Andy remained silent for a time and then said, "I thought that I would have trouble to get you to take me; I have a great mind not to go now."

"Very well," said Forester.

Andy made no reply but with much dexterity he proceeded to serve the supper.

The hunter ate but little, he seemed restless and proceeded at once to make preparations for an early start in the morning, his canoe was too small to carry two men and the supplies required for winter use, but Andy had obtained Col. Adams' large canoe, which was in excellent condition. As the night was far advanced Andy wrapped himself in his blanket and was soon fast asleep in the tent. Forester placed several large sticks on the fire and sat down beneath the heavy green spruce trees that encircled the camp and listened to the hooting of an owl that seemed to protest against having its eyes dazzled by the glare from the great fire. Although having no desire to sleep, the hunter at length lay down, but long before day dawned he arose, replenished the fire and proceeded to load the canoes while Andy prepared breakfast.

Such early rising did not meet with the approval of the Irishman, who, while at breakfast, enquired of Forester if he ever slept during the day.

"No," was the reply ; " what makes you suppose that I should do so?"

" Every one sleeps sometime," said Andy ; " and as you do not rest at night I thought that may be you might go to bed in day time like the wild beasts with whom you associate."

" The distance to the winter hunting ground is further than we can go in one day," replied Forester ; " it is now late in the season, and should cold weather set in the formation of ice would prevent us from getting our canoes through the lake."

" Is there so much difference between the woods in one place and the woods elsewhere?" enquired Andy.

The hunter replied that " on the shore and islands of the lake autumn could be pleasantly spent, but that the extensive pine forests where the deer ranged and the glossy marten, mink and fisher could be found were better places in which to spend the winter."

At noon on the second day the travellers approached the mainland near the head of the lake, and, with the canoes, entered the mouth of a river. The water was remarkably clear and the shores heavily wooded. At a distance of two or three miles from the lake the water became swifter ; soon the sound made by rapids was heard, and on turning a bend in the river a small clearing was observed on the shore, quite near the falls.

A rustic lodge, nearly concealed by trees, became visible. Originally natives of the forest, the trees although not large, had become quite ornamental, having thrown out many new and vigorous branches on account of being exposed to the light of the sun and constantly refreshed by the spray from the falls. There was a carefully arranged garden with a number of fruit trees and some grape vines that seemed to flourish with vigor, for owing to the proximity of the falls no frost blight was likely to rest on a garden so situated. The solitude of the situation was a little relieved by the presence of a number of bee hives that had not yet been placed in winter quarters, although the hives were protected from the depredations of bears by rows of posts set firmly in the ground and pointed at the top. The small clearing had been sown with clover for the benefit of the bees and for the fragrance and beauty of the bloom.

Although the grass and clover were somewhat withered, owing to the lateness of the season, a number of deer were feeding in the little field and the astonishment of these wild natives of the woods at seeing human beings, was very great. The appearance of five or six deer, of different sizes, so excited Andy that he could scarcely be restrained from firing as the wild creatures stood indulging their curiosity and expressing their alarm by repeated snorts.

“Stop, stop, Andy,” said Forester, “I never shoot the deer which feed in this field, we can obtain all the venison that we require in the woods further off, and it is pleasing to see these fine fellows or others like them enjoying themselves. I have often thought of what an interesting picture a likeness of this place would make. With the deer, the woods, the river, and the falls in view ; but, after all, the reality is better.”

When a fire had been kindled in the stone chimney of the lodge and a bucket of water brought from the beautiful spring close by, the supplies from the canoe were carried to the wide store house. The canoe was also taken from the water to a secure place. Forester then proceeded at once to take care of the valuable furs in his possession by stretching the skins in a proper manner. Andy took charge of the wild geese and other game that had been secured on the way amongst the islands of the lake. While preparing a fine roast for supper, Andy expressed regrets that there were no potatoes. Forester directed the Irishman to what appeared to be a mound in one corner of the garden. An examination showed a small door that when opened disclosed a passage that led to the interior of a root house, where potatoes and other vegetables were found. When Andy returned with a basket his face was radiant, and his manner gave evidence of much satisfaction.

CHAPTER XVII.

When the snow fell and ice covered the lake and river, the woods became more solitary than was agreeable to either Forester or his companion and neither seemed to care as much as formerly for the excitement of a hunter's life. For lack of other employment Forester was much in the woods with his rifle and Andy was often employed in bringing in venison or the spoils of some bear that had been discovered in winter quarters.

As the season advanced the weather became stormy, deep snow bent down the branches of the evergreen trees and so covered the ground that wild creatures could not pass through the forest. The storm was soon followed by a thaw, that melted the snow on the ice and caused the lake to become covered by a shallow sheet of water. A calm, cold night converted the water into ice as smooth as glass and as solid as marble. A crust was also formed on the snow in the woods. Wild animals had not been moving for a number of days, and were now sure to come forth from their haunts and run on the frozen snow in search of food.

Forester put on his skates, taking his rifle in his hand and hauling a light hand-sleigh, he started down the river towards the lake to put in order some wolf traps. The ice was in such

excellent condition that it was a real pleasure to glide round and between the islands. Few animals were noticed excepting some otters, and these kept close to small holes in the ice near the shore. The otter is an animal possessed of much curiosity, and although ever ready to dash out of sight through an opening in the ice, the beast seldom remains long down, but comes out to examine the object that has caused alarm. One of the necessary accomplishments of those who are much in the woods is the knowledge of the habits of animals. As soon as the hunter discovered the otters, he used proper caution and practiced much skill in approaching and secured several ; as the rich and valuable fur was then in the very best condition a few hours were profitably spent.

The short winter's day had nearly closed when Forester prepared to return, placing the animals which he had taken on the hand sleigh, he put on his skates and proceeded homewards. As he approached the main land he noticed a deer bound out of the woods and rushing on the smooth ice the beast fell, and owing to the speed at which it was going, the deer glided far out on the slippery surface. The poor creature was no doubt pursued by wolves and in its terror had mistaken the clear ice for water. Forester already understood that owing to the deep snow that had prevented them from capturing deer, the wolves were in a starving condition, and would now

take advantage of the crusted snow to pursue their prey, for deer would break through where the wolves could run on the surface. The deer was attempting to make its way to one of the islands but was continually falling, soon a number of wolves appeared and seeing the prize ahead they also rushed out on the ice. Forester waited until the deer and its enemies had advanced some distance from the land, then taking his tomahawk, with its long springy hickory handle, he bore down like a flying terror on the astonished wolves, and getting between them and the shore to prevent their return he passed with amazing swiftness amongst the beasts, that could not run without falling, and at every blow a wolf fell to rise no more. Forester, accompanied by his companion, returned to the lake next morning, to look after the dead wolves. When Andy saw a number of shaggy monsters dead on the ice, each having been killed by a single blow on the head, his astonishment was great, for knowing nothing about the deer, which had escaped, he believed that a terrible hand to hand fight had taken place between his master and the wild beasts.

CHAPTER XVIII.

The winter was drawing to a close, the days had become longer, the air milder, the sap of the sugar maples commenced to flow, trees were tapped, the kettles were prepared and a camp in the woods arranged. A number of deer that had spent the winter in the vicinity, on account of the advantage which the open water below the falls afforded as a place of escape from the wolves, proved troublesome in the sugar bush. The deer had a fondness for the sweet sap and visited the troughs at night, frequently knocking out, with their heads, the wooden spouts that conveyed the sap from the trees to the troughs. Andy regretted that the wolves which had been persecuting the deer during the winter, did not renew their attention and chase the deer away.

About the middle of March the first black birds arrived, their red wings showing beautifully as the birds alighted on the trees in the vicinity of the open water of the rapids, glossy minks could be noticed running along the shores of the river in the early morning. Sometimes otters were observed swimming near the rapids below the falls or devouring the fish which had been captured, while during the passing hours of the mild spring nights the pleasing note of the small sugar owl could be heard. Wild ducks and geese commenced to arrive,

the ice on the river broke up and between the woods and the ice that remained on the lake a belt of open water appeared. Numbers of pike and other fish commenced to move into the shallow water along the shore to enjoy the light and warmth of the sun. The canoes were launched but Forester seemed more disposed to enjoy the presence of the returning birds or listen to the wild call of the grey goose or the whistling of the wings of the ducks that in great numbers passed to and fro, or splashed and sported in the waters of the quiet sunny bays of the fast opening lake than to create consternation amongst the happy flocks by firing his gun. Even on the shore there was a general awakening of wild life and the chipmunk and the wood-chuck came forth from their burrows, partridges drummed in the woods and the solitary bear commenced to walk the forest. At a time when all nature was rejoicing it seemed cruel to destroy life either in the woods or on the waters. A change appeared to have taken place in the disposition of the hunter. He spent his time chiefly in attending to his bee hives, in preparing his beds of tulips and other flowers or in arranging his grape vines, while Andy with his spade quickly put the garden in excellent order.

Preparations were also made to return to the settlement. The furs that had been secured during the winter were packed in bundles, the canoes were prepared, but the expedition was

delayed for a time Forester cutting his hand while making a paddle.

One fine morning in May, Andy was busy as usual in the garden, the bees were all abroad, the woods were bright and fragrant with wild flowers and songs of many birds were in the air. Forester, whose hand had not wholly recovered, was admiring the blossoms of the fruit trees and the rich beauty of the opening tulips when he heard the distant report of a gun. For a moment a feeling of regret seemed to pass in his mind, for he knew that his retreat had been discovered and that in all probability Col. Adams, uneasy at his long absence had come to look for him. An answering shot was promptly fired, and in a short time the bow of a canoe appeared and soon the whole was visible.

While concerned on account of the continued absence of the men in the woods, Col. Adams had a desire to examine the district which he now visited for the first time, and ere he landed from his canoe he understood that he had been correct in supposing that the person whom he now sought had other interests in the wilderness than those of shooting and trapping, and when the house and garden were seen and the falls examined, the Col. knew without having been told, that Forester was the owner of the fine tract of land that formed the surrounding district toward which settlers were even then fast

approaching, and looking forward into coming years, the Col., in fancy, saw a prosperous town the centre of a magnificent settlement, and was delighted to discover that the stranger in whom he had taken such an interest had views and notions so much like his own.

Andy soon had ready a dinner, consisting of trout, delicious venison ham, potatoes and bread with maple syrup and cranberries. After dinner the garden was visited. Forester was most anxious to make some inquiries about Miss Adams and her sister, and while the Col. was expressing his admiration of the beauty of the tulips, he was asked if Miss Ermina had any such flowers in bloom and if she had as beautiful a variety as she formerly possessed.

The reply was that she continued to be as much interested in flowers as ever, but that there were no tulips in bloom when he left. Most likely Col. Adams would have said more but his attention was just then attracted by the plunging of the fish in the water below the falls. Numbers of large pike, pickerel and black bass, that were stopped in the attempt to go up stream by the rocks over which the water poured, were engaged in capturing minnows from the shoals that were moving in the rapids, and the plunging that took place during the pursuit was most interesting to the lover of the rod and line.

On the following day the party ascended the river in a canoe many miles, and made short excursions into the woods in order to examine the land and the timber, and on their return made preparations to start for the settlement.

Andy had breakfast ready early in the morning, and as the rising sun cast a burst of glory on the vast sea of green leaves formed by the tree tops, and on the white blossoms of the wild forest trees along the river the party set out, leaving the beautiful garden, with the rich flowers to bloom in solitude, the birds to sing their songs and the industrious bees to continue their labors.

CHAPTER XIX.

Long experience and much acquaintance with the islands of the lake enabled Forester to select an attractive spot on which to camp for the night. The trees were arrayed in the freshest green, the wild plums and the June berry were heavy with blossoms, and many varieties of wild flowers adorned the spaces between the groves, while birds of various descriptions expressed their gladness by pouring forth sweet sounds that floated far on the evening air.

As the darkness seemed to close in a circle round the blazing fire, conversation turned on the peculiarities of men who adopted strange ways of living, and Forester remarked that in his intercourse with mankind he had experienced so much that gave him pain that he felt satisfaction when spending leisure hours in such a place as they now occupied.

"No man," replied the Col.; "can live without having some intercourse with his fellow men, and there are few who do not at times love solitude and retirement where for a season they can enjoy quietness and repose."

"How beautiful is the evening," said Forester; "the moon is rising above the woods that fringe the lake, the whip-poor-will is complaining from the grove, the old owl on the cedar tree seems displeased on account of the brightness of our fire, the stars are casting their shadows in the water and an air of quiet peacefulness and serenity has settled on the landscape. At this hour the heavens and the earth seem to worship the great architect divine."

CHAPTER XX.

“Mina! Mina! the wild man’s tulips are in full bloom, and are lovely,” said Mary Adams, as she came in at the open door, looking radiant with her white straw hat in her hand; “you need not blush, the monarch of the woods will no doubt be here himself soon if his long sojourn with the beasts has not destroyed his humanity; what an awful thing it would be if he should return with a face like that of a bear.”

“Our experience with the man you speak of should not lead us to suppose that he is on such friendly terms with bears that he will appear in the likeness of one,” said Ermina, “but I wish father would return; it is now two weeks since he went away, and still he lingers.”

“The canoe is at the landing,” said Mary, “father and the wild man are there also; now you blush. The red of a tulip is nothing to the carnation in your cheeks.”

In a few days the old minister before spoken of arrived at the village and young Forester was married to Miss Adams. A beautiful and roomy birch bark canoe was placed on the familiar and tranquil waters of the lake, and the romantic and happy lovers, now united for life, passed on their way amongst the green islands that cast inverted shadows in the clear depths.

The house in the woods by the falls was in due time reached, and a few weeks were pleasantly passed in attending to the garden, where the first roses were in bloom and the song of many birds floated on the morning air, while the bees were all abroad amongst the blossoms of the forest trees.

